Problems of COMMUNISM

Khrushchev's Foreign Policy

ADAM B. ULAM

The Soviet Woman in Fiction

XENIA GASIOROWSKA

Communism in Africa

DAVID T. CATTELL

The Vienna Youth Festival

MORTON SCHWARTZ

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Khrushchev at the Helm: V

EDITORS' NOTE: The discussion below of the recent trends in Soviet foreign policy constitutes the eighth article in the current series on Russia under Khrushchev's leadership. Mr. Ulam maintains that Kremlin foreign policy has been more relentlessly obtrusive and more demonstratively cordial in the post-Stalin era than ever in the past, and he traces this paradox to the internal stresses created by the maturation of Soviet society. Because ideology—in which the power of the party is rooted—is on the decline at home, the regime is impelled toward a dynamic policy of ideological expansion abroad: yet it is equally compelled to avoid provoking open war. In these various pulls he sees the cause of the contradictory course of Mr. Khrushchev's free-wheeling diplomacy.

The present series will conclude in the next issue with a further study of the character and function of ideology.

Expansion and Coexistence: Counterpoint in Soviet Foreign Policy

By Adam B. Ulam

IT IS BOTH A TRUISM and something of an understatement to observe that Soviet moves and moods in the field of diplomacy exhibit a high degree of fluctuation. To cite an obvious example: in 1952 Soviet policy makers were calling Tito and his cohorts "American agents carrying out espionage and sabotage assignments from their American chiefs . . ." (Malenkov's words at the 19th CPSU Congress). In 1956 the erstwhile agent became a valuable ally of the Soviet Union. In 1958 he was in the limbo of "revisionism" and again outside the "socialist camp." *Vis-à-vis* the United States, Mr. Khrushchev has shown himself capable in the course of a single conversation of passing from the warmest of eulogies to threats and boasts of Soviet nuclear war potential.

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The Americans and Titoists are not the only objects of this dizzying alternation between threats and the glad-hand. Colonel Nasser, a protégé of Moscow in 1956 and 1957, was coldly reproved in 1958 for his persecution of Communists in Egypt and Syria. Khrushchev's fury at Gomulka during his rush visit to Poland in the crisis of October 1956 reportedly drove him to accuse the Polish leader of trafficking with "imperialists" and "Zionists." The same Gomulka merited Khrushchev's arm around his shoulder and was hailed as a true friend of the USSR when the ebullient Soviet leader was again in Poland in July 1959.

Examples of this seeming inconsistency can be multiplied *ad infinitum.* They extend not only to the realm of personal behavior by the Soviet leaders, but also to the general tenor of their policies. Since 1955, the period roughly of Khrushchev's ascendance in Soviet politics, the foreign policies of the USSR toward the West have

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been, paradoxically, both more insistently aggressive and more insistently cordial than at any previous period since the war. Can one make rhyme or reason out of the whole pattern?

It may be useful to state two generalizations as a starting point. Never in Soviet history, save perhaps for the immediate postrevolutionary era, has there been as direct a connection between the internal and external policies of the regime as since Stalin's death in 1953. And never, again with the exception of the first period of Soviet rule, have the successes and failures of foreign policy been as important to the character and evolution of Soviet totalitarianism as in the present and the foreseeable future.

Differences of Degree

Stalin's death gave his successors an opportunity to demonstrate their conviction that the despot's policies had become obsolescently, indeed dangerously, rigid and oppressive. It is important to emphasize a probably concensus on this point among the Soviet leaders. There must have been, and there probably still are, clashes of opinion over the *pace* and *character* of destalinization at home and abroad, but not on the general and urgent need for it. Soviet politics since the death of Stalin have consisted not only in administrative and political intrigues among the competing leaders, but also in their effort to associate themselves in the public mind with a particular aspect of destalinization, and thus to gain popularity which by osmosis would be translated into votes in the Central Committee and influence in the apparatus. Beria "campaigned" on the issue of "socialist legality" and the ending of Great Russian chauvinism. Malenkov had as his "platform" more consumer goods for the people. They acted too precipitously, uniting other leaders against them. Khrushchev, on the other hand, directed his campaign to the revival of party spirit and vitality, managing in the process to incorporate the most attractive elements of his rivals' appeal; by the time the leaders combined against him in June 1957, they found they were too late to curb his power.

It fits right into this picture that the defeated faction, which at the time constituted a majority of the Presidium, was branded in the official communique announcing the "conspiracy" as the enemies of new "liberal" reforms, and that Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich were insinuated to be Stalinists, opposed alike to a relaxation in international affairs and to increased production of the goods the people wanted. That these changes were conjured up for public consumption seems obvious; whatever the clashes that broke up the collective honeymoon, the likelihood is that in international as well as in domestic politics there was, at the start, a broad consensus among Stalin's successors that new policies and a new spirit were needed, and that the continuation of the old ones might mean disaster for the Kremlin.

Consider the picture in 1953. The rigidly hostile policies of the Soviet Union had managed to unite the West, leading to NATO and the proposal for German rearmament. Twice—over the Berlin blockade and upon the outbreak of the Korean conflict—the spectre of all-out war had been raised, at a time when the Soviet Union was still behind the United States in the development of nuclear weapons.

Stalin's intolerance of the slightest potential opposition had led to a breach with the Yugoslavs, hitherto faithful and zealous followers of the Moscow line and Soviet Russia. Among the repercussions of the dispute, Stalin's imperial attitude toward Tito had severely undercut the appeal of communism in Asia and other colonial or semi-colonial parts of the world. In the satellites, the Tito affair had led to new extremes of terror and oppression, causing demoralization both within the Communist parties and among the public at large, and further discouraging efforts at economic growth. Finally, the general tenor of Stalinist policies within the bloc raised a potential threat of trouble with Communist China, though even the old despot probably realized that a country of 600 million could not be treated like Bulgaria or Czechoslovakia.

The New Leader Image

Thus from every point of view a change was indicated, not because the new leaders were more liberal or peaceful than their predecessors, but simply because common sense dictated new methods, and because the measures and setbacks which could be afforded by a dictator with unchallenged and unlimited power could not be indulged in by men who had to share power, and whose failure would make them vulnerable to their competition.

If it is true that the disputes within the collective leadership ranged around the pace and character of destalinization rather than its essence, then the personal characteristics of Khrushchev assume added importance in explaining subsequent domestic and foreign politics. A cautious deemphasis of Stalin's rule began right after the dictator's death, and continued, by implication rather than by outright condemnation, for two and one half years. Then came a bombshell—Khrushchev's uninhibited, if cleverly designed, exposure of Stalin's atrocities at the 20th Party Congress. Observe the parallel in for-

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eign politics: a cautious normalization of relations with Yugoslavia, the cessation of the preposterously violent attacks which had characterized Stalinist utterances on Tito, and then the sudden, self-invited visit of Khrushchev and Bulganin to Belgrade in 1955 and their frantic wooing of the ex-heretic.

These moves are more than a mere product of the personal ebullience and rashness of the First Secretary. They reflect in the first place his conscious attempt to fashion a new image of the Soviet leader. Stalin in his last years stood aloof, awesome in his total isolation from the people and the party hierarchy alike, an omniscient exponent of Marxism and the laws of history. There is no place for this type of dictator in the more industrialized and more advanced Soviet society of today. The new image of the dictator is that of a man of the people, who sacrifices some dignity for the common touch, who works through personal contacts rather than edicts.

Ideological Stresses

A rather more important aspect of Khrushchev's leadership on the domestic and foreign front concerns his attempted revival of the role and vitality of Communist ideology. The main *motif* of his "secret" speech, just as of his visit with Tito, was his seeming conviction that communism is a vital and triumphant creed. It has no need to conceal its mistakes, or to hide personal aberrations. The doctrine and its future are greater than any man. And so communism has no need for terror and oppression; it can provide ideological links among independent countries, and it has an appeal which transcends the mere military power of the USSR.

The same note has been visible in the incessant visiting in which Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders have indulged since 1955. Their various trips to the satellites no longer convey the picture of leaders conferring with local subordinates or addressing restricted party gatherings. Nowadays they act more like political campaigners: they visit schools, tour factories and address public meetings—even in countries like Hungary, where the majority of their listeners, with the scars of 1956 still raw, could hardly feel sympathetic to Soviet power or communism. The Kremlin leaders seem impelled toward an effort to convince the people, perhaps even themselves, that ideological links are important and meaningful and that communism means more than just terror and bureaucratic control.

In this attempted revivification of ideology, the sphere of foreign relations plays an increasingly important role. At the 21st Party Congress Khrushchev spoke at unusual length about the problems of transition from socialism to communism. For all his self confidence and his glowing pictures of the Communist future, one can detect perhaps a note of doubt as to whether the old concepts and categories hold much meaning in the industrialized society which is Russia today. His very reiteration of the theme that communism is approaching, that there are already "signs" of certain state functions passing to the people, sounds at times as if he were protesting too much and knew it. It is unlikely that all the speeches of the First Secretary or all the articles in *Voprosy Filosofii* would convince anybody — including Mr. Khrushchev himself—that the Soviet Union was moving toward the "withering of the state," or toward the condition of "from everybody according to his ability to everybody according to his needs."

But if society and even the party are becoming more ideologically agnostic, does this not present a threat, even if a distant one, to the regime? This is the dilemma—or to use a Marxist term, the "inherent contradiction"—in the new "populistic" type of totalitarianism which the regime is trying to construct, one which was not present in the old terroristic and ideologically rigid system of Stalin. It is significant that whenever the issue has become critical there has been a lapse toward Stalinism, as in the regime's curbing of the intellectual ferment of 1956 and in the ejection of the anti-Khrushchev opposition in the summer of 1957.

It becomes clear why dynamic policy and ideological expansion abroad are increasingly crucial to the Soviet domestic situation. The regime's aim is to provide a "proof" of the correctness and importance of Marxism-Leninism, in order to dissipate the potentially dangerous indifference to ideology at home. A Soviet citizen might not see many points of relevance between the ideology and his daily life. He might even suspect that an advanced, industrialized Russia would continue to produce more earth satellites and consumers' goods whether it was under a Communist system or not. So he is subjected to a continuous barrage of propaganda stressing the importance of the advance of communism in the world at large. The alleged unity of the "camp of socialism" is pointed out to him as proof that only communism can guarantee peaceful international relations.

Thus foreign successes and a continued evidence of the solidarity of the Soviet bloc are very necessary elements in domestic politics. This consideration adds to the compulsion for an expansionist policy abroad, curbed only by an equal compulsion to avoid an all-out nuclear war. If the Soviet citizen can be made to believe that "all the roads in our country lead to socialism," he is less likely to develop doubts as to where socialism at home is leading him and his society.

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Recent developments concerning the German issue provide particular insight into the variety of motivations and drives which lie behind the Soviet Union's external behavior.

Kremlin Policy on Germany

The German problem has been the focal point of East-West relations. A unified non-Communist Germany would be a definite setback to Soviet hopes on the continent; a unified Communist Germany, on the other hand, would tend to intimate the evanescence of Western influence and the invincible dynamism of Marxism-Leninism. Neither situation is feasible of achievement in the immediate future without courting the serious danger of all-out war—and the Soviet leaders realize this, as Mr. Khrushchev's utterances within the past year have indicated. Short of such a drastic development, the main danger, from the Soviet point of view, is that the growing strength and prosperity of Western Germany will increasingly emphasize the relative backwardness of the Communist sector, with the result that German nationalism will range itself behind the Western position and make the life of the East German government more difficult. A secondary danger is that Bonn's growing ties with the West will bring European integration closer to reality, erecting—in the process of a reinvigoration of European unity and influence—a definite barrier to Soviet hopes of Communist expansion.

For the Soviet policy planners there is, then, a strong contrast in the broad picture of continental as against non-European developments: the evolutionary trend in many non-European areas—*e.g.,* current social and economic developments in the Near East and Africa—is not unfavorable to the spread of Soviet influence, and a policy of patience may be justified; but on the continent, particularly in Germany, the strategy of "letting nature take its course" is fraught with disadvantages for the USSR. Hence, the need for an aggressive policy.

The Soviet approach to the German issue has represented a combination of hammer and chisel techniques: the attempt has been to probe for the weakest links and cracks in the West's agreed position on Germany, and then to subject any promising fissure to ceaseless hammering. It is useless to try to define Soviet "aims" on Germany. The Kremlin policy gives every evidence of being fluid and dynamic, having at any given point no inflexible aim, but only the general goal of arresting the spontaneous development of economic and political forces inimical to Soviet interests, and of eroding Western unity as well as the Bonn republic's self-confidence and influence. At one time the Russians made a determined effort first to test and then to weaken the links between Bonn and the Western Allies. Having failed, they applied the chisel to another spot—the areas of possible variation between United States' and British policy on Germany. Khrushchev's erratic behavior during Prime Minister Macmillan's visit to Russia last winter is explicable both as a gambit aimed at ferreting out and exploiting differences of opinion between the two allies, and also as irritation over the meagerness of his find.

The same method lies behind the Soviet government's threat of last November of unilateral action on the German problem unless the Four Powers could find an agreed solution within six months. The announcement and its sequel have constituted an exhibition of Soviet "brinkmanship" in foreign affairs: the specter of a new Berlin blockade, this time backed up by the full nuclear and missile power of the Soviet Union, was deliberately raised, but with a counterbalancing plea for negotiations and the proposal to turn Berlin into a demilitarized free city. The Kremlin took the initiative with a bold threat, but the lines of a diplomatic retreat were left open. One may contrast this technique with the heavy-handed attempts at a *fait accompli* which were evident in the original Berlin blockade, or in the sudden attack upon South Korea. Since Stalin's time Soviet diplomacy has grown more flexible and resourceful; yet at the same time Soviet policies have grown, if anything, more insistently obtrusive.

This inclination toward maximum pressure is tempered by the realization of the enormous risk of a nuclear war. The obsessive insistence on the need for a summit conference of the heads of the Great Powers reflects the Kremlin's duality of motivations. The six months' limit lapses; the ultimatum is ignored because, as the Soviets explain it, the four powers *are* negotiating on the German problem. Yet the Geneva conference of foreign ministers becomes stalled, with Moscow's spokesmen expressing a variety of proposals clearly and foreseeably unacceptable to the West. One gets the impression that underneath the surface contradictions, the threats and the pleas, the Soviets are in effect saying to the West: "Tell us where we can push you and yet not provoke an atomic war."

Satellite Problems and Policies

Putting this another way, the Soviet leaders seek, very simply, to have their cake and eat it too; while this attitude is present to a degree in most politicians, for the Soviets it constitutes the rationale of all political maneuver.

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This characteristic, blatantly revealed in the issue over Germany, has also been apparent in Mr. Khrushchev's policies within the Soviet bloc. By 1958 the Soviet attitude towards Eastern Europe had come to rest at a point representing about a halfway retreat from the "liberal course" of 1955-56 back toward Stalinist methods and ideas.

The "liberal course" was based on assumptions which the events in Poland, and to a much greater extent the revolt in Hungary, showed to be palpably unrealistic. Those assumptions reflected, no doubt, a certain provinciality of outlook and experience on the part of the Soviet leadership. Feeling that destalinization and the official acknowledgement of past Stalinist oppression had led, after a certain shock, to a revival of party spirit and to a greater popularity of the Communist regime in the USSR, the Soviet leaders blithely assumed that parallel measures in the satellites would have similar results. Soviet control was to remain, but in less obvious and odious forms, inspiring genuine gratitude and friendship for the USSR rather than sheer fear. The local Communist parties, freed from day-to-day detailed supervision by their Soviet masters, would still follow the Russian lead, but their morale, performance and influence among their peoples would be improved.

This pleasant dream collapsed in the fall of 1956. Gomulka was not only rehabilitated but was carried to power by what amounted to a national revolution, though it was contained within the bounds of an intra-party *coup*. In Hungary revulsion against the past exploded into a national revolution against communism itself. The Russian intervention in Hungary stopped what might have been a chain reaction throughout the other satellites. As it was, the events of 1956 represented a serious defeat for Soviet policies, a defeat which found an echo in domestic developments. The liberalization in Poland —which went far beyond the Soviet "thaw," especially in the intellectual sphere—obviously had unsettling effects among a part of the Russian population, in particular the intellectuals and students. It is highly probable that the weakening of Khrushchev's position during the winter of 1956-57 was connected with the failures of the policies for which he had been responsible. To the Soviet leaders—Khrushchev included—the events of 1956 must have demonstrated the close connection between their foreign successes and failures and the stability of their totalitarian regime at home. This again is a new factor. It would be laughable to suppose that the Russo-Yugoslav dispute of 1948 had affected Stalin's position in the slightest or made him vulnerable to domestic critics.

After the defeat of the anti-Khrushchev opposition and the elimination of Zhukov, the leadership was free to try to work out a new formula. A return to the pre-1953 position in the Soviet bloc was impossible. It is probable that the international gathering of party leaders in Moscow for the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution was convened not only to demonstrate the supposed solidarity of the Communist states but also to attempt the renewal of some form of international organization on the order of the Cominform. It is alleged that the Yugoslavs and even the Poles balked at this proposal. In 1958 Tito was excluded again from the Communist club; he was by now recognized as the carrier of the "revisionist" virus, and his contacts with the satellites were identified as the main source of Soviet troubles there. Moscow's eventual decision that force and threats of force could never be dispensed with in Soviet-satellite relations was brutally illustrated by the execution of the leaders of the Hungarian uprising.

The new policy, temporary as all Soviet policies in this sphere must be, was displayed in the warm support given to Gomulka during Khrushchev's tour through Poland in July 1959. In the erstwhile heretic whose return in 1956 almost led them to an intervention by arms, the Soviet recognize their current ideal insofar as the leadership of the satellites is concerned. An ideologically-motivated Communist who will follow the main lines of Soviet policy, and who is yet respected in his own nation, Gomulka represents an asset the Soviets must wish they could duplicate in the other satellite regimes. But by the very nature of the relationship between Poland and the USSR, the ambivalent role of the Polish Communist leader—his hold upon national support on the one hand and Soviet approval on the other —cannot be preserved for very long. The incompatibility of *real* national independence and of membership in the Soviet bloc has been demonstrated in the postwar course of Russo-Yugoslav relations. It is not likely that the other illusion—of the compatibility between general subordination to the Soviets and yet pursuit of a really different road to socialism—can be indefinitely preserved.

The Chinese Puzzle

If in regard to the satellites Khrushchev's problem is to gauge and impose the acceptable limits of Soviet domination, then in regard to Communist China the problem is the infinitely more complicated one of recognizing and regulating the interdependence of the two great Communist powers. An open breach between them could mean not only a challenge to his leadership, as in the case of a failure of satellite policy, but a dis-

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aster—a drastic refutation of the whole thesis of the cohesive and victorious role of Communist ideology. At the same time the militancy of the Chinese Communists, their much more literal and naive reading of Marxism, and (probably) their continuous demands for increased technical and economic help, create a situation which, for all the outward harmony and mutual congratulations, cannot be very reassuring. It is significant that at the height of the Near Eastern crisis of last year, Khrushchev found it necessary to fly to Peking with his war minister. Whether the cause was the Chinese' pique over their exclusion from the Soviet proposal for a Great Powers' conference, or, conversely, the Russians' fear of some reckless Chinese act against Formosa, the mere fact of the trip is illuminating. Stalin would not have gone but would have summoned! Khrushchev's far from private grumblings over the commune program may reflect not so much an ideological purist's anguish that the Marxian injunctions were being violated, as a very practical fear that the Chinese Communists' over-hasty and risky industrialization might involve them in difficulties and setbacks, which could lead to claims for additional Soviet help or to a premature and disastrous move against Formosa.

It must be said here that any illusions or wishful thinking about the imminence of a Russo-Chinese break are unfounded; both sides clearly have too much to lose by a public quarrel. At the same time this new dimension of Soviet statesmanship—the need to treat a Communist state almost on equal terms—surely affects the whole complex of Soviet foreign policies. More than ever before the Russians are impelled to seek a formula for relations in the "camp of socialism"—a formula which can no longer express merely the vast preponderance of power of the leading Communist state.

Outside observers are not in a position to assess the truth of rather frequent rumors concerning Chinese Communist interference in the guidance of international communism. In 1956, it is alleged, the Chinese prompted the Polish Communists to act more independently *vis-à-vis* Moscow; in 1958 they were supposed to have taken the initiative against Tito and revisionism. One has to be cautious in taking those reports at their face value. The 1958 campaign against Tito, for instance, was obviously and carefully planned beforehand, and it would have been a psychologically sound move to have attacks in the Chinese and Czech press precede or coincide with Soviet condemnation of the alleged heresies in the program of the Yugoslav Communist Party.

In contemplating the Sino-Soviet puzzle, all that can be said safely is that Lenin's dictum concerning "inherent contradictions" within the structure of the capitalist states has, ironically, become highly relevant and indeed applicable to relations within "the camp of socialism."

A Summary View

An overall picture of Moscow's foreign policy can suggest only some of the complexities and problems discernible behind the facade of Soviet self-confidence and Soviet truculence. One should feel neither reassured nor unduly depressed over the prospects for peace in observing the main trends of Kremlin policies. The general picture is not so much one of aggressiveness, with no thought given to the possible consequences of a basic clash between East and West, as of a certain restlessness in Soviet Russia's foreign policies—a calculated "pushfulness" which is designed, but alas cannot be guaranteed, to stop short of all-out war.

Given this restlessness, a reflection among other factors of the domestic and ideological problems of the totalitarian regime, there is no assurance that any policy will remain constant, no matter what the Soviets feel at the moment it is adopted. There have often been very drastic reversals in the pattern of Soviet policy, witness the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939. But the years since Stalin's death have accelerated the pattern of change. Tito, in 1956 a trusted ally, becomes by 1958 a revisionist in Soviet eyes. Nasser, a protégé in 1956-57, ceases a year later to be a satisfactory partner in the Near East. Will Gomulka be as highly regarded and be deemed as useful to Soviet purposes a year or two from now as he is at the present? Would not the "objective forces of history," by Communist definition, make any agreement arrived at with the West about nuclear disarmament or Germany subject to Soviet criticism or denunciations a short time hence?

It is often said that the Soviets do not really want an agreement, or cannot be trusted to keep one, on any major subject of international politics. This is incorrect. On the contrary the Soviet government shows eagerness, and it is apparently genuine, to arrive at an agreement with the West on a number of subjects, which if left unsolved might lead at any point to the catastrophe of an atomic war. The sad fact is that while they want an *agreement* on specific issues, the Soviets do not want—or, to speak more precisely, the premises and the present position of their totalitarian system do not allow them—to reach a final *settlement* on the major sources of international tension.

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The Communes: A One-Year Balance Sheet

By H. F. Schurmann

JUST ABOUT ONE YEAR has passed since the Mao regime officially launched the great "communization" of rural China. A burst of wild excitement followed the August 1958 announcement "introducing" the model "Sputnik" commune to the public. On September 10, the CPC Central Committee's resolution of August 29, calling for the transformation of all collectives into communes, was made public. Day after day, all the mass media of mainland China poured forth a deluge of enthusiastic reports about the progress of the vast reorganization. Within two months, the great majority of agricultural cooperatives throughout China had been merged into gigantic "people's communes." The press exuberantly began speaking of the start of the transition to full-fledged communism. Foreign visitors rushed to see the new formations in the countryside, and their observations were reported back to avid readers at home. Coolness and suspicion marked the reactions of the Soviet bloc, but the Chinese experiment nevertheless attracted worldwide attention, arousing curiosity, consternation, and even fear.

Then, some four months after the excitement began, came the CC Plenum's new resolution on the communes, adopted at Wuhan on December 10, 1958. As will be shown later, cautious moderation in developing the commune system was the dominant note of the new directive. The intense exuberance of the preceding months began to wane, and as the months went by, less and less news of the communes appeared in the mainland press. What did appear was more sober, reflective, and analytical. At the same time, reports of severe hardship and social unrest in the communes began filtering out of China with increasing frequency and received much publicity in the West. Some Western observers hastily concluded from these signs that the experiment was a failure, that the Chinese Communists had overreached themselves in attempting a totalitarian regimentation of the peasantry far more intensive than Stalin had imposed in the Soviet Union in the 1930's—with almost catastrophic consequences.

But despite the disappearance of the early enthusiasm, there certainly is no evidence that the Mao regime is anywhere near considering the communes a failure. To be sure, certain significant changes have taken place, and the present article will endeavor to clarify them. First, however, a brief recapitulation of the highlights of the communes' background, inception, and development seems in order.

Genesis of the Communes

Viewed in broad perspective, the communes seem to represent another stage on the Chinese Communist road toward total organization of the peasantry. First there was land reform, then the formation of mutual aid associations, then the grouping of these into elementary cooperatives, then the transformation of elementary cooperatives into cooperatives of "advanced type." Mao announced early in 1956 that, by the end of 1958, cooperatives of the advanced type would be universally established. The communes were the next step toward consummation of the process of total peasant organization systematically pursued since 1949. However, there were specific, immediate reasons which impelled the Chinese Communists to push ahead with the inauguration of the communes in the summer of 1958.

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Perhaps the most important single impetus was the urgent need to augment the supply of agricultural labor. By the latter half of 1957, the regime had come to the realization that its industrial development plans depended squarely upon a simultaneous expansion of agricultural production.[1] This meant not only greater investments in agriculture, but also the execution of large-scale construction projects, particularly for irrigation and water conservation, without which no permanent increase in agricultural production was possible. However, the sudden, massive concentration of rural labor on water projects produced a shortage of labor in agriculture proper, where none had existed before, and this became a pressing concern of the Chinese Communist leadership by early 1958.

The second major spur to the creation of the communes was the regime's determination to achieve the needed expansion of production, and hence of capital accumulation, in agriculture while at the same time lessening agricultural dependence upon the industrial sector. To this end, a program of technological improvement, accompanied by a growing decentralization of productive functions and administration, had been in progress in agriculture. In particular, the regime had been pressing for the development of small factories and workshops in the rural districts for the purpose of satisfying their own primitive industrial needs.

Other factors helped to make 1958 a propitious time for launching the communes. The regime's massive education program had increased literacy among the peasantry and facilitated the recruitment and training of peasant leaders. During the winter of 1957-58, moreover, large numbers of urban cadres had been transferred to the rural areas under the decentralization program *(hsia-fang),* providing a solid core of dedicated party activists without which the establishment of the communes on a nationwide scale would have been impossible. The bumper crop of 1958 also was an important factor in that it eased the food situation in the countryside and thus removed, for the time being, a frequent cause of rural tension.

Thus, the regime's decision reflected a convergence of pressing economic needs and propitious circumstances, and the economic objectives were, in turn, reflected in the new communal structure. Each commune represented an amalgamation of many cooperatives, usually transforming an entire village or even a combination of villages into a single commune. The new formations were no longer purely agricultural, but combined agriculture, industry, commerce, education, and defense. Each commune was to set up its own small-scale factories and workshops, banks and credit offices, schools (both primary and advanced), and militia. Each was to become self-sufficient, "like a small nation" as one commentator put it.

Much of what had still remained the peasant's private property in the cooperatives was now to be turned over to the commune. Nor was he any longer a peasant in the strict sense, since every commune member was required to belong to a production brigade which might be assigned as readily to construction or industrial tasks as to working the communal farmlands. As a worker, the peasant would no longer receive a share of the crop, but would be paid a wage. Perhaps the greatest innovation was the establishment of communal dining halls, nurseries, kindergartens, and tailoring shops, the chief purpose of which was to "emancipate" the women of the commune from domestic chores so that they might perform productive labor. Food was to be supplied "gratis" to commune members.

On the one hand, the "liberation" of women for productive tasks eased the rural manpower shortage, while the creation of a more tightly-organized and flexible labor force was calculated to heighten production efficiency. On the other hand, the diversification of communal economic activities served to promote the regime's goals of greater local self-sufficiency and decreased dependence of agriculture on the more advanced sectors of the economy.

The communes also became the basic administrative units for rural China. The village governments were merged into the communal administrations, which thus became the lowest organs of the state bureaucracy. At the same time, party control was safeguarded by seeing to it that key administrative positions in the communes were occupied by trusted party members, and by recruiting local peasant leaders to serve as party cadres. Both these moves, of course, were designed to give the party-state a firm grip on the communes as a precaution against any possibly undesirable side-effects of economic self-sufficiency and the creation of communal militia forces.

The Frenetic Mass Movement

The Chinese Communists have repeatedly shown their adeptness in the techniques of manipulating mass behavior for the purpose of putting across new policies of major importance, and the launching of the communes was no exception. The population was caught in a wave of continuous meetings, demonstrations, and propaganda pressures. A frenzy of excitement gripped the country during the months of August, September, and October,

[1] Cf. Choh Ming-li, *Economic Development of Communist China,* University of California Press, Berkeley, 1959, p. 221.

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and the whipped-up enthusiasm of the masses was an important factor behind the rapidity with which the "communization" of rural China was carried out. Vast communes with thousands of members sprouted up almost overnight. It was significant that the drive occurred at the crux of the Near East and Quemoy-Matsu crises, which permitted the regime to proclaim the creation of the communes, and the formation of peasant militia in particular, as an expression of popular determination to resist "American aggression."

The descriptions of the communes organized during this early period showed a striking diversity. There were differences in size, organization, and economic planning. Some communes were, indeed, highly "communistic," "supplying" their members with almost all their daily living needs under the so-called "seven-supply" and "ten-supply" systems; in others, only rice was supplied, while other necessities had to be bought from wages. The Central Committee resolution of August 29 had explicitly stated that the size and methods of the communes, as well as the tempo and sequence of transformation, were to be locally, not centrally, determined. Although this may have reflected recognition that local variations would be inevitable in so vast a program, it seems more likely that no clear-cut overall plan had been fully worked out beforehand. The fact that almost nothing had been reported about the experimental communes set up some time previously (including the later famous Sputnik commune in Honan) supports this view. Moreover, the precipitate and seemingly uncontrolled manner in which the drive was carried out would be difficult to reconcile with the existence of a master plan.

Some foreign observers who were in China during the peak of the drive saw in the apparent "upsurge" an indication of genuine popular enthusiasm, and their reported views were duly seized upon by certain left-wing publications as evidence of public support of the regime's action. Others, however, were more discerning. The British M.P., R.H.S. Crossman, who visited China in September 1958, later wrote that a "hard, puritan élite of peasant Communists" had been the real driving force in implementing communization. The regime itself, he maintained, had been surprised at the rapid burgeoning of the movement and had then stepped in "to even out this uneven development."[2]

It is, indeed, inconceivable that the movement was a truly popular one driven by the unanimous enthusiasm of the peasantry. Peasants everywhere are conservative, suspicious, wary of change. But the Mao regime had succeeded, in the past few years, in building up a new corps of party activists in the countryside—young people, most of them of extremely low social origins—who are now enjoying a new sense of power. These are the "hard, puritan élite" seen by Crossman, and it was they who were the prime movers of the communization drive.

Organization obviously requires organizers. The simple enunciation of an edict is not enough to effect change; there must also be a body of leaders at the local level, who are submissive to central authority, yet ready to exercise initiative and act spontaneously. Chinese Communist literature on organization, particularly the writings of Liu Shao-ch'i, constantly emphasizes the need for "initiative" and "spontaneity" on the part of cadres, as well as for their "dialectical" opposites, absolute discipline and submission to higher party authority. Initiative-plus-submission is, in fact, the essence of "democratic centralism" in the Chinese context. The "hard, puritan élite of peasant Communists" were trained to respond with both these qualities to all new policy.

The experience of Hsü-shui county in Hopeh province, which many foreign visitors have since visited, is a good example of how well this training of peasant cadres paid off. On August 20, 1958 (just two days after the first report about communes had appeared), the central party organ, *Jen-min jih-pao* (People's Daily), reported that following a visit by Mao on August 4, all 248 cooperatives in Hsü-shui county had been amalgamated into communes, the whole process having been more or less completed by the middle of the month. There can be little doubt that Mao's visit touched off the move (anticipating, as it did, the August 29 Central Committee directive), but obviously such a large-scale and speedy reorganization, affecting a population of 310,000, would not have been possible without the initiative and disciplined effort of a local corps of party organizers.

Phase II: Correction and Consolidation

Here, it is necessary to pause for a moment in order to give a somewhat broader picture of Chinese Communist tactics in general. Whenever the Mao regime has introduced major new measures, it has first formulated the policy in broad terms and announced it to the public with great fanfare. Party resolutions embodying it are sent out to local party leaders at the mass level to be first discussed in big public meetings and then implemented according to specific local conditions. This initial phase of implementation is characterized by great excitement, confusion, and local variation.

Later, when experience has shown in what specific directions the regime should move, a second phase be-

[2] R.H.S. Crossman, "The Chinese Communes," *New Statesman* (London), January 10, 1959, pp. 34-5.

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gins in which the central leadership begins to exert unifying control. In Phase II it is not spontaneous local initiative, but monolithic obedience, that is demanded of the mass-level cadres. This tactic, which might aptly be described as "two steps forward, one step back," has been applied in every mass movement launched by the Chinese Communists since taking power. It has been clearly evident in the development of the communes, where the second phase of unifying control, correction of excesses, and consolidation began in December 1958 and is still going on.

The experience of the first phase made it clear that, while the communes solved or eased certain problems, they created others. The conscious effort to decentralize the economy by fashioning the communes into self-sufficient entities combining agriculture and small-scale ancillary industries, formulating their own production plans, and having their own militia, did indeed tend to lessen the dependence of agriculture upon industry and to promote greater capital accumulation. But decentralization also meant a danger of weakening the monolithic political control of the party. True, the integration of the communes into the state bureaucracy and the filling of top posts in the commune administrations with party nominees provided certain safeguards. However, to run the communes effectively, the party had to recruit additional cadres from among local non-party peasants whose primary identifications were undoubtedly local, and this could well lead to a dilution of party control.[3]

Again, the communes eased the shortage of labor in the countryside, but the institution of the system of "free supply" of food and other living needs gave rise to a variety of problems. In some communes, so much was included in "free supply" that wages were almost eliminated, meaning that those who worked little—or conceivably not at all—would be nearly as well off as those who worked hard. Even where this was not the case, the new wage system was highly "equalitarian" at first, individuals of differing skills and output often receiving roughly the same wages. This inevitably discouraged the more able and productive workers from putting forth full effort, and threatened to have a serious impact on output. Thus, correction of "equalitarian" excesses in the whole system of "supply" and wages in the communes has been a major problem of the second phase.

The start of Phase II was signalled by the December 10 resolution of the CC Plenum, decided upon at Wuhan and officially published on December 17.[4] At first glimpse, this new directive "on certain problems relating to the people's communes" showed marked differences from the original resolution of August 29. The earlier pronouncement had been brief; it had not been made public until almost four weeks after the initial announcement about the Sputnik commune; and it had been notably passive in tone, seeming merely to give the Central Committee's stamp of approval to a movement already in being. By contrast, the December 10 resolution was long and detailed; there was no significant delay in its publication; and, far from passively accepting a *fait accompli,* it decisively laid down policy for the development of the communes. It is this policy which has furnished the basis of all subsequent discussions on the subject in Communist China.

The Signal for Retrenchment

The opening paragraph of the new resolution radiated confidence: *e.g.,* "in 1958 a new social organization appeared, fresh as the morning sun, over the broad horizon of East Asia." The sober, moderate tone of the rest of the document, however, contrasted sharply with the unrestrained exuberance that had characterized Communist press treatment of the communes in the months between the August 29 and December 10 resolutions. Moreover, on December 16, one day before the new resolution was published, it had been announced that the same session of the CC Plenum had approved Mao's decision to "retire" from his post as Chairman of the People's Republic upon expiry of his current term. These simultaneous devolpments unleashed a flood of speculative interpretations abroad. Some Western observers viewed the Wuhan resolution, particularly its warning that the vaunted transition to communism was still far off, as signifying a retreat in the face of pressure from Moscow, where the communes had been accorded an obviously cool reception. The West German periodical, *Der Spiegel,* spoke not only of a decisive intervention by Moscow in Chinese political affairs, but also of a serious conflict between Mao and his second in command, Liu Shao-ch'i.[5] At the very least, the Wuhan resolution, because of its sober restraint, was interpreted as a sign that China was backtracking on the communes, while some even saw it as an admission that the entire experiment had failed.

Yet, despite the differences noted above between

[3] Communist descriptions of the organization of the Sputnik commune indicated that it was the duty of the commune party committee to "recruit the leading cadres of the commune." See *Ta-kung-pao* (Hong Kong), September 22, 1958, p. 3.

[4] Text published by New China News Agency (NCNA), December 17, 1958.

[5] *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), April 1, 1959, p. 38.

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the August 29 and December 10 resolutions, it was not so much the contrast between these two directives, but rather the contrast between the sober tone of the Wuhan resolution and the exaggerated optimism of the intervening period, that created the impression of a retreat. If one rereads the August 29 resolution, one finds that it, too, sounded a definite note of caution. Many of the strictures voiced in the December directive were already present in the earlier pronouncement, which was full of phrases like "one must not force, one must not hurry, one must not demand." The transition to communism was as far off in the first resolution as it was in the second.

At the same time, the concessions made by the Wuhan resolution were by no means as far-reaching as some observers claimed. Most if not all the essential features of the communes remained intact. What the resolution did was to re-enunciate the need for moderation, for avoiding undue haste in developing the communes, and above all it asserted the party's primacy of leadership and control over the entire process. Section 6 of the resolution contained this crucial passage:

The basic problem in operating a people's commune is the strengthening of the party's leadership. . . . There are some people who think that with the communes, the party is no longer necessary, that one can carry out a so-called unification of party and commune. Such thinking is false.

Thus, while the resolution may have represented a tactical retreat from the extremes that had developed in the first phase of communization, in a more important sense it marked the beginning of a systematic tightening of the party's grip on a "mass movement" which in many ways seemed to have got out of control.[6]

In fact, the resolution as a whole moves in two directions simultaneously. On the one hand, it ordered moderation in work, discipline, and organization. Commune members were to be allowed at least eight hours of sleep. They were to be allowed to keep a certain amount of private property, such as trees around their houses, tools, and some livestock. "Distribution according to work" was to be restored as the basic principle of remuneration, so that greater effort would earn higher rewards; and it was stated that 90 percent of all commune members should enjoy increased incomes in the ensuing years. The family was not to be destroyed: commune members might still live together with their aged parents and their children. All these stipulations obviously were corrections of excesses which had developed in many of the communes as a result of over-zealousness or fanaticism on the part of the cadres, causing great dissatisfaction among the peasantry.

[6] For an analogous interpretation by a veteran Hong Kong observer, see *China News Analysis,* No. 258, January 2, 1959, p. 5.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, COMMUNIST STYLE

The police and public security personnel in various localities of the country carried out "love the people" month campaigns before or during the spring festival. Through such efforts, they have further improved relations with the masses. In return, the masses are enthusiastic about assisting public security personnel in the maintenance of peace and order.

Organization of the campaigns by public security personnel was decided upon at the Ninth National Conference of Public Security Personnel in July 1958. According to a conference decision, a nationwide "love the people" movement would be carried out by public security personnel during the spring festival, or during the last month of each year, in an effort to improve further the working style of public security personnel. . . . .

According to statistics compiled in 44 cities and counties of Kwangtung Province, during the "love the people" month campaigns the people's police served the people on more than 152,000 occasions. This included oven repairing, house cleaning, firewood cutting, water carrying, and laundering. . . . Through the implementation of the campaigns, a large number of the people's police have rectified their working style and made friends with the masses. . . .

At the same time, the masses also learned from the campaigns. They have realized their responsibility of safeguarding the socialist construction of the fatherland and maintaining peace and order. The people in Taishan county, Kwangtung Province, recently assisted the public security department in uncovering remnant counterrevolutionaries. A woman in Hsiangtang county, Hunan Province, recently was wounded in assisting police in searching for an escaped prisoner. A thief with a previous criminal record recently surrendered to the public security department in Chiangmen, Kwangtung Province. He was impressed by the "love the people" movement.

—New China News Agency, Peking, February 24, 1959.

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On the other hand, the latter part of the resolution balanced these "concessions" with stipulations clearly designed to tighten organizational unity and discipline. As mentioned above, the leading role of the party was to be decisively strengthened. The communes must operate according to the principle of "unified leadership and management at different levels." At the lowest (or individual commune) level, "unified leadership" was vested in the commune administrative committee (controlled of course by the party); however, the production brigades should be allowed to retain some independence of action in order to "advance their positive spirit," [*i.e.,* initiative and commitment]. The communes were no longer to have sole control over their own militia formations, which henceforth would be under dual control by the commune administrations and "higher-level militia command organs." Finally, all communes were directed to carry out "the work of education, ordering, and consolidation" by means of constant criticism and rectification.

The Communes in 1959

Since the Wuhan resolution, the communes have received progressively less and less publicity, and the tenor of what has been said about them in the Chinese Communist press and official statements has been notably moderate and restrained. In his report to the National People's Congress on April 18, 1959, Premier Chou En-lai set forth the future tasks of the communes in one short paragraph. Consolidation (literally, "hardening"), he declared, is the prerequisite for successful development of agricultural production. The wage system shall remain based on the principle of "distribution according to work," and all exchange shall take place for equivalent price: *i.e.,* no exchange without money. Unified leadership, management, and accounting at each level will continue to be the basic organizational principles, and economy shall be rigorously practiced.[7] Save for the new emphasis on economy, nothing here differs from the policy laid down at Wuhan.

One aspect of the communes that has continued to provoke frequent discussion since Wuhan despite the general decrease in publicity has been the problem of the wage system. As previously mentioned, many communes during the early days, influenced by the millenial Marxist slogan of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need," adopted an "advanced" system of remuneration under which the importance of output as a determinant of how much the worker would receive was reduced. It was soon realized, however, that this lessened the incentive for the most productive workers to put forth maximum effort, and the Wuhan resolution therefore reaffirmed the principle of "distribution according to work."

In conformity with this policy, the communes have generally re-instituted the so-called "work-day" wage system long familiar in Communist countries. Briefly explained, a "work-day" under the Chinese system consists of ten "work-units" and theoretically represents the amount of work the average person can perform in one day (the work-units of course varying for different kinds of labor). There is a standard monthly work quota of 28 work-days for men, and 25 for women. For every unit performed above the quota (a person may work more than 28 work-days during the same calendar period), the worker receives a wage bonus, while those who fail to achieve the standard quota may have their basic wage reduced proportionately. In other words, there has been a return to pure stakhanovism in the communes.[8] One might note in passing that this retreat was in line with objections voiced by Krushchev and Mikoyan regarding the Chinese experiment, stressing the necessity of material incentives. Be that as it may, one of the great advantages claimed for the communes at first—a levelling off of the economic status of rich and poor peasants and of rich and poor collectives—has been nullified in the interests of increased production.

In conjunction with the renewed emphasis on stakhanovism in the communes, there have been violent attacks on "equalitarianism." Neither socialism nor communism means "equalitarianism," declared an article in the party theoretical journal *Hung-ch'i* (Red Flag). The author continued:

> **The work done by each worker is different in quantity and quality; some do much, others little; for some quality is high, for others different again. . . . The authors of the classics of Marxism, our Party's Central Committee, and Comrade Mao Tse-tung already quite early criticized the error of this kind of equalitarianism. In history, workers have often held illusions of equalitarianism. During slave uprisings and in the struggles of the peasants, they tried equalitarianism. This is a reflection of the fact that the workers had not yet matured in their struggle to free themselves. In reality, they have never, and can never, attain the hoped-for result. We must oppose equalitarianism and, in the socialist stage, uphold the principle of distribution according to work, and exchange according to price. Only in this way can one aid the development of working-class solidarity and positivism, the strengthening of the communes, and the development of socialist production.**[9]

[7] *Jen-min jih-pao* (Peking), April 19, 1959, p. 3.

[8] *Ibid.,* March 10, 1959, p. 3.

[9] *Hung-ch'i,* No. 7, April 1, 1959, p. 20.

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Another article in the same journal emphasized that the system of "work much, earn much" would continue for a long time, and that in fact "this system, compared to that of earning without working, is far more equitable."[10] The subject clearly rankled, however, for *Red Flag* returned to it once more a few months later in a wordy theoretical article which sought to show that Marx himself favored "distribution according to work." One of the major sore points was evident in the author's admission that "the wages of workers under capitalism also seem to be distributed according to the principle of 'work much, earn much' "[11]

There have also been repeated appeals for reducing waste in the operation of the communes. One article complained that the "supply" system in some communes was leading to over-eating.[12] Again, there have been indications of a persisting shortage of labor, and reminders of the necessity of preparing for the summer wheat harvest. In this connection, a tendency has become evident to de-emphasize long-range construction projects in the communes in favor of greater concentration on the immediate task of agricultural production. Warning that the communes cannot develop very rapidly in view of the primitive state of Chinese agriculture, an article in *Red Flag* stated:

The emphasis on basic construction in the communes is on construction of a productive nature. Too much capital cannot be wasted on non-productive construction, nor must the standards of construction be too high . . . the communes are now engaged in several long-range construction projects, such as water works, reforestation, soil improvement, development of mineral resources, improvement of housing, etc. These are important. But such construction projects must not monopolize too much capital and labor which would impede the raising of production.[13]

The Call for Greater Unity

Beginning early in 1959, one also could sense a renewed emphasis on "national integration." An article in the February 16 issue of *Red Flag* (pp. 9-12) coined a new slogan, "the entire country like a chessboard." The author, K'o Ch'ing-shih, explained that this meant a policy of "thoroughly combining collective leadership and management at different levels, of thoroughly combining central and regional strengths, the strength of the state and that of the masses." Going on to pose the question of whether such a policy might not "inhibit the development of initiative in local areas and individual sectors," he answers—in a strangely Confucian way—that the national economic plan is like the score of a symphony orchestra: each player must develop his own skills, but also must obey the conductor and play according to the score. Instead of decentralization, so much talked of in 1957-58, the keyword now is unity. Thus, another writer notes that while the commune has become the basic unit of social organization in Communist China, "it is at the same time the basic unit of state political power."[14]

The "contradiction" between "production for self-sufficiency" and "commodity production" (for the national market) in the communes is another problem that has received attention. It was one of the most important topics discussed at a conference of 245 leading mainland economists held in Shanghai last May, and the debate apparently called forth a diversity of views. Many of the economists held that if the communes oriented production too much toward satisfying their own needs, they would be unable to produce adequately for the national market, and *vice versa.* No definite pronouncement was issued, but a certain "consensus" emerged to the effect that the contradiction might be solved by emphasizing adherence to the national economic plan on the part of the communes, but making certain allowances for specific local conditions. In general, however, it was agreed that the communes should observe the principle of "placing the nation first, and the 'collectivity' [*i.e.,* the commune] second."[15]

Thus, it was clear by the summer of 1959 that the regime was trying to create some sort of balance between the state and the communes. The leadership, recognizing that decentralization had been carried too far, had called a halt and begun backtracking, but reintegration did not mean that all the advantages of decentralization were to be abandoned. Somewhere a balance was to be found which would allow the communes a certain amount of initiative and at the same time assure unimpaired control by the state.

By the time the present article appears, the summer crops will have been harvested, and preparations will be underway for the fall harvest. It will then perhaps be possible to discern clearer signs of the success or failure of the communes with regard to the supreme goal which inspired their creation: the boosting of agricultural production. On the other hand, the occurrence of massive floods in Kwantung, and of typhoons such as the recent one in Chekiang, is sure to affect crop results and may make them inconclusive as a test of the communes' effec-

[10] *Ibid.,* No. 6, March 16, 1959, p. 4.
[11] *Ibid.,* No. 11, June 1, 1959, p. 22.
[12] *Jen-min jih-pao,* March 17, 1959, p. 7.
[13] *Hung-ch'i,* No. 7, April 1, 1959, p. 22.
[14] *Chung-kuo ch'ing-nien* (China Youth), No. 2, 1959, p. 36; see also *China News Analysis,* No. 265, p. 2.
[15] *Jen-min jih-pao,* June 1, 1959, p. 7.

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tiveness. In the meantime, a few preliminary observations may be offered.

First, in the author's opinion, observers in the West have generally tended to over-emphasize the importance of peasant discontent in the communes as a factor shaping regime policy. That the disruption of traditional family life, the incredibly heavy work load forced upon the peasants, and the obviously low, sometimes marginal, standard of living prevailing in the communes caused discontent is beyond question. Nor is there any doubt that this fact troubled the regime, as evidenced by the concessions made in the Wuhan resolution and by the many "rectification" movements which were subsequently instituted in the communes and which are still going on. Yet, in the author's view, it would be wrong to conclude that peasant discontent has been the regime's *major* concern with respect to the communes. The publications of mainland China usually serve as a fairly accurate mirror of the vital problems that are currently preoccupying the leadership. Thus, for example, the regime's very deep concern over the Tibetan crisis was reflected in a deluge of writing attempting to show that the Tibetans had finally "welcomed" socialism into their country. In the case of the communes, although there have been sporadic indications in the press that unrest exists, the absence of any concerted press campaign combatting it is a fairly dependable sign that other aspects of the communes have loomed larger in the minds of the leadership.

From the regime's standpoint, the most crucial problem arising out of the early development of the communes appears to have been excessive decentralization. In a sense, the cart had run away with the horse. The communes were tending to become small, self-sufficient little islands, operating more or less autonomously in areas hitherto subject to centralized state control. The incorporation of the commune administrations into the state bureaucracy and their manning by party-chosen nominees did not prove to be adequate safeguards against excessive decentralization, for as has been pointed out, the party had to take in large numbers of local recruits to serve as cadres, thus strengthening localistic tendencies.

If excessive decentralization was the regime's first concern because it weakened coordinated, centralized control, excessive "equalitarianism" was the second because it reduced work incentives and thus militated against the very goal of the communes' creation—greater output. Indeed, decentralization and equalitarian ideas spelled danger for the state in an earlier period of Chinese history. Chinese peasants have traditionally tended to identify strongly with their native villages, and decentralized village organization usually strengthened this identification, developing a tight, village-oriented solidarity. Equalitarianism encouraged peasant resistance to exploitation, and peasant organizations sometimes were seed beds of revolt, as in the case of the 19th-century Taiping rebellion. Consequently, when the communes were encouraged to organize their own militia, there must have been many Chinese Communists who questioned the wisdom of such a move. Now, the communal militias have quietly been brought under centralized military control.

All the efforts of the regime in recent months have been directed toward reasserting state and party control to the extent that is necessary to achieve the desired balance between local "initiative" and "spontaneity" and preservation of the regime's supreme authority. It remains to be seen whether such a balance can in fact be attained and, assuming that it can, whether it will fulfill the regime's economic expectations.

* * *

Editors' Postscript: Just as the present issue goes to press, Peking has announced new decisions by the CPC Central Committee implicitly acknowledging that China's "leap forward"—in particular, the effort to expand agricultural production by means of the commune system—has fallen far short of the regime's expectations. A communique of August 26 reveals that the CC Plenum, meeting at Lushan August 2-16, re-examined the economic situation in detail and passed a resolution drastically reducing the original production targets set by the 1959 national economic plan. The reductions were substantial for steel (from 18 to 12 million tons) and coal (from 380 to 335 million tons), but were much more drastic for agriculture where the 1959 target for grain was cut from 525 to 275 million tons, and for cotton from 5 to 2.3 million tons. The communique indicates that the Plenum based its decision in part on actual production in the first half of 1959, and in part on "verified statistics' for 1958 showing that the previously reported production figures for that year (on which the original 1959 goals were based) were grossly exaggerated. *E.g.,* "verified" 1958 output of grain was only 250 instead of the earlier claimed 375 million tons, and of cotton 2.1 instead of 3.35 million tons. Of the total 11.08 million tons of steel produced in 1958, moreover, 3.08 million tons represented production by crude communal plants suitable only for local use; and because of the agricultural labor shortage, such rural output will no longer be included in the national plan, but will be left to local discretion. The communique also admitted intra-party dissension over the communes and denounced "right opportunist ideas" among the cadres as "the principal danger confronting the achievement of a continued leap forward."

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The Bulgarian "Leap Forward"

By Boris A. Christoff

THE RECENT SOVIET THRUST toward accelerated economic development, heralded by the launching of the Seven-Year Plan, has inevitably had repercussions in the satellite countries of Eastern Europe. One of the little publicized effects of the drive has been the strained effort of the Bulgarian Communist regime to undertake a "great leap forward" of its own. The declared purpose of the drive, which cuts across all sectors of the economy, is the usual one: to expedite the transition from socialism to communism as the *sina qua non* of achieving a life of plenty for the people.

An assessment of the impact of the new program requires a few preliminary words about the state and structure of the Bulgarian economy since the Communists came to power in 1946. As in the other satellites, the system of centralized economic controls was imposed on a step-by-step basis. By 1948 most industrial concerns, all banks, insurance companies, as well as internal and external trade, had been nationalized. However, in agriculture—the biggest sector of the economy, accounting for over 90 percent of the country's exports before 1939—the take-over took much longer, mainly because of the stubborn resistance of the peasants in defense of private land ownership. First "persuasion" and then brutal coercive methods were used before the Communists could claim that collectivization had given them control over agriculture.

It was against this background that the five-year state economic plans were launched, beginning in 1949. Basically, they have been imitations of the Soviet five-year plans, with priority emphasis placed on heavy industrial development. In the first plan, this emphasis led to the severe neglect of other sectors. The second, launched in 1953, showed slightly more consideration for light industry and consumer goods. In the third plan, proposed for 1958-62, the main stress was still on heavy industry, although provisions were made for the further development of certain light industries and agriculture was given some measure of attention.

While production goals have varied from plan to plan, they have generally been overinflated, and output has fallen short of the targets. This is reflected in the notorious unreliability of regime statistics: optimistic production figures released at the quarter-year mark have subsequently had to be revised downward; glowing annual percentages of increased industrial output have conflicted for their part with the final totals for the five-year plan periods.

It is paradoxical that in spite of the efforts since 1956 to dovetail the economic activity of the Soviet bloc through the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA—established by Stalin in 1949 in response to the Marshall Plan), some of the satellite regimes have persisted in the dogmatic approach to industrialization. This has meant costly duplication and enormous waste in the creation and use of industrial facilities. In Bulgaria, the dogged adherence to plans not adjusted to the country's conditions and resources has created particularly heavy hardships.

No Look Before the Leap

The Bulgarian high command started paving the way for its accelerated program in August 1958. The trumpet call was sounded by the circulation of slogans "proposing" the fulfillment in three years of the third five-year plan (for 1958-62). Two months later, after the newspapers had published "hundreds of telegrams received from all parts of the country supporting the idea," an October plenum of the Central Committee declared that there was now a "mass movement of the

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people from below, and it was very important that it should be coordinated with a proper movement from above."[1] Following on this press campaign, the party's First Secretary, Todor Zhivkov, made the new program public at a meeting of the local party organization in Vratsa on October 24, 1958.[2] Declaring that the Central Committee could not remain idle in the face of the unbounded force of the masses—"free men and women who are eager to break all sorts of norms, tempos and plans in order to improve their standard of living"—he announced that government and party organizations would take immediate steps to create technical, financial and "organizational" conditions for the success of the speed-up campaign.

While the original proposal had been couched in terms of accelerating the five-year plan, the general program announced by Zhivkov was so drastic as to constitute virtual abandonment of the plan, especially in agriculture where tremendous increases of output were demanded. Anticipating protest at this junking of the economic blueprint adopted only a few months earlier, Zhivkov launched a bitter attack against would-be critics—"those clever men" who would ask how it was possible to scrap a plan and its directives "which are a law for everyone". He argued that both the plan and its alteration constituted "correct" decisions, declaring: "For us the economic plan is not something static; it is only a proximity and it is to be expanded and improved according to the experience and the wishes of the masses."

The Program for Agriculture

The most dramatic provisions of the "leap" program were those affecting agriculture. Zhivkov announced that agricultural output was to be doubled during 1959 and trebled in 1960; at the same time, he confirmed the regime's intention to push forward with a drive to merge Bulgarian collective farms (called Labor Cooperative Farms, or LCF's) into larger units. That the latter drive was already underway had become public knowledge a few days earlier: on October 15th Radio Sofia announced that a number of experimental mergers had been undertaken in various parts of the country for some weeks past; on the following day the party daily *Rabotnichesko Delo* issued a general "recommendation" of collective mergers in the interest of "fullest exploitation of the soil and . . . increasing agricultural production."

In endorsing the drive, Zhivkov again tried to anticipate potential critics (who, in his words, might ask "What is the use of mergers when the separate farms are doing well?") by resorting to the excuse that the regime was impelled by a "mass movement from below" which it could not afford to ignore. By a process of circular reasoning, the merger policy was also defended as a means to *expand* "the mass movement for the earlier fulfillment of the third five-year plan." The First Secretary was more down-to-earth in a speech a few weeks later to the Central Committee (November 11, 1958), when he declared that under the new order not only would crop production be increased, but also "several hundred million workdays" could be extracted from the peasants in autumn, winter and early spring for general public projects such as irrigation and land reclamation.[3]

As at the beginning of the drive for collectivization in 1948, the Communists insisted that farm amalgamations were to be voluntary, depending entirely on the decision of member peasants. That coercion was used seems evident, however, from the swiftness with which the drive progressed. According to the Central Statistical Department in Sofia, 3,450 Labor Cooperative Farms, each with an average 11,000 decares of land (1 decare=0.2471 acre) before the amalagamation, had by January 1959 been merged into 625 LCF's, each averaging about 70,000 decares of arable land.[4]

The Pattern—Chinese or Soviet?

One aspect of the merger campaign deserves mention as an interesting indication of satellite and Soviet reactions to the Chinese commune experiment. It is clear that at least some of the Bulgarian party leadership felt strong admiration for the commune system and favored adopting a similar pattern of organization in the course of amalgamating the collectives. One such leader was Vulko Chervenkov, a member of the party's Politburo and Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, who had spent several weeks visiting in China during the summer of 1958 and had made a number of speeches upon his return extolling the "Chinese achievement."

Not long after Zhivkov's October exhortation for farm amalgamations, *Zemedelsko Zname*, the organ of the "Agrarian Union" (the Communist-controlled Peasant Party) announced that a number of collective farms

[1] *Rabotnichesko Delo*, October 5, 1958.
[2] *Ibid.*, October 26, 1958.
[3] *Ibid.*, November 14, 1958.
[4] Central Statistical Department report on amalgamated labor cooperative farms, January 4, 1959.

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had merged on the Chinese pattern and were now calling themselves communes.[5]

The First Secretary's position on this development was soon made clear: in his aforementioned speech of November 11 to the Central Committee, he went out of his way to stress that the amalgamation of the collective farms in Bulgaria had as its pattern "the rich Soviet experience," and that people who had different ideas had better give them up. (Strangely enough, he did remark that agricultural research stations could benefit from "the Chinese experience.")

About a month later a curious incident took place. On December 7, *Rabotnichesko Delo* published a report of the formation of a giant cooperative in the Botevgrad district (northwest Bulgaria). Some 35,000 farmers with more than 150,000 decares of arable land, 14,000 decares of orchard, 40,000 decares of pasture, and livestock consisting of 3,000 cows, 1,700 bulls, 1,500 pigs and more than 20,000 sheep, had united into a single enterprise which they named "Botevgradska Komuna" (Botevgrad Commune). The report gave full details about the new governing body numbering 41 people, and described in glowing terms the tremendous, unprecedented enthusiasm which this "gigantic step forward" had aroused among the entire people of the Botevgrad district.

The following day (December 8), *Rabotnichesko Delo* came out with a categorical retraction:

The information published on the front page of yesterday's issue of this paper to the effect that the whole of the Botevgrad district now consists of one gigantic cooperative farm is grossly inaccurate.

After giving some details about the mergers that had taken place on a smaller scale in various parts of the country, the paper declared:

The Central Committee of the party has never made any recommendations for the merging of the collective farms of a whole district into one unit. The amalgamation of cooperative farms must be based on the specific economic and other conditions obtaining in the region concerned. The responsibility for this inaccurate information rests with a member of the editorial staff who has since been punished.

The swiftness and insistence of this denial, following up the line of Zhivkov's November statement strongly suggests a Soviet warning to Sofia to steer clear of the Chinese pattern. That the incident took place at all, however, may be a reflection of persisting differences of opinion within the leadership and on lower party levels. It is worth noting that the man reported to be the new chairman of the huge commune, by name Vassil Tzanov, was in fact the Secretary of the district party organization. It is also interesting that as late as January 1959 Vulko Chervenkov was still issuing open statements of praise for the Chinese communes.[6]

Industrial Aims and Means

While the measures undertaken in agriculture constituted a sweeping change of policy, they were not allowed to interfere with the priority to be given to Bulgaria's industrial development, in conformance with the general block pattern. The significant goals of the industrial "leap" were announced on January 20, 1959, when Zhivkov's program was published in the form of formal "theses" presented to the party Central Committee.[7] The contemplated goals were set forth in terms of achievement expected by 1965. Some idea of their size can be gained from a comparison with actual output during 1958, as reported in a release of the state Planning Commission, to wit: production of iron ore is supposed to rise from 280,000 to 1,000,000 tons per year; pig iron, from 84,000 to 300,000 tons; steel, from 210,000 to 450,000 tons; rolled metals, from 39,000 to 300,000 tons; lead and zinc ore, from 2,241,000 to 2,890,000 tons.[8]

Admitting that a major factor in past economic failures has been the excess of centralized bureaucratic control and red tape in the management of the national economy, the regime concomitantly announced a far-reaching reorganization of the state apparatus.[9] First the central administration was to be simplified: a number of ministries were to be abolished (for Heavy Industry, Light Industry, Communal Economy, Public Works and Roads, Food, Electrification and Water Economy, Construction and Building Materials, and Public Health and Social Welfare) and functions reassigned to four so-called Committees—for Industry and Technical Progress, Construction and Architecture, Labor and Prices, and Health Protection and Social Problems. At the same time the country was to be divided into 30 regions, with governmental and economic administration under the control of so-called regional "People's Councils," replacing the previous hierarchy of 13 regional and 117 district administrations. The central Committees would retain control over

[5] *Zemedelsko Zname,* November 2, 1958.

[6] See two articles in *Rabotnichesko Delo,* January 10 and 15, 1959.

[7] *Ibid.,* January 20, 1959.

[8] 1958 figures from State Planning Commission's report of March 13, 1959.

[9] Zhivkov's "theses," *loc. cit.*

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planning and finance but otherwise would rely on the People's Councils. This, it was claimed, would achieve a "decentralization of power," at the same time eliminating the "superfluous intermediaries" in the old chain of command.

A related and crucial aspect of the "leap" program was the regime's emphasis on tapping all possible "manpower reserves" in order to expand the labor force involved directly in industrial and agricultural production. The administrative reorganization, it was announced, would involve the dismissal of some 140,000 state and party officials, who were to be channeled into productive jobs. In addition, employees of all state and economic departments, of the party apparatus, and of social and welfare organizations were to be assigned to 30 or 40 days a year of productive physical labor; this ruling affected men under 50 years of age, and women under 45. According to reliable report other potential reserves—including housewives and pensioners, university students and younger children—have since been "urged" into service for the state.

The quest for manpower is without question the impetus behind another major measure of the "leap forward"—the proposed reorganization on a vast scale of national education.[10] Patterned closely after the recent Soviet precedent, the new program announced a series of contemplated steps which would give heavy priority to technical and scientific studies, within the framework of a general reform of all branches and levels of learning; its most essential feature, however—like that of its model—was the proposed enlistment of youth in the tasks of current production through a program of "doing while learning." "The younger generation must play its part in the construction of socialism and communism—mental and physical labor must be combined," said Mr. Zhivkov to a Komsomol audience last November 27, 1958.[11] Educationalists have since been exhorted to study and "correctly understand" the tasks set by the leadership and to "keep in step with the political and labor enthusiasm of the masses."

A Course of Obstacles

The above measures constitute the main aims and proposed means of the Bulgarian leap as it emerged from Mr. Zhivkov's pronouncements and from other official statements and decrees. After an extended period of public "debate" (about which more later), the basic program was formally enacted into law on March 12, 1959, by the National Assembly. From the first it had been clear that the regime was imposing upon itself—and its subjects—a monumental task, compounding old difficulties by inviting new ones. While it is, of course, much too early to render any definitive judgments on the ultimate measure of success (or failure) which may be encountered, it is certainly fair to conclude from the evidence of intervening months that the program as yet has not gotten very far off the ground, and indeed has met with resistance both among the people and within the party.

That trouble was certainly anticipated to some degree was apparent from the combined notes of urgency and uncertainty which had marked official pronouncements from the beginning. While insisting that the time was ripe for the steps that would "bring us as near as possible to the threshold of the construction of communism," the party leadership repeatedly warned that the task which "we now impose on ourselves is admittedly a very difficult one. . . . It would be foolish to pass over in silence or to underestimate the obstacles."[12]

THESE OBSTACLES—and there are many—are partly economic in nature, but to a greater degree they are rooted in the attitudes of a population too long overdriven. On the economic side, there are innumerable chronic problems to be coped with. To cite just a few over which there has been constant official harping, there is the problem of inefficiencies and waste inherent in an unbalanced economy, the shortage of investment funds, irregularity in the supply of raw materials, the need to make fuller use of existing machinery, the problem of improving the organization of production.

In the agricultural sector, it is hard to see how the new program, merely by virtue of more pressures, will be able to reverse the trend which has reduced Bulgaria from a prewar exporter of large farm surpluses to a country barely able to feed its own population, let alone supply sufficient agricultural raw material for its infant industries. It is noteworthy that within a week of Mr. Zhivkov's announcement doubling the production target for 1959, the Central Statistical Department released figures for the third quarter of 1958 revealing that production of several crops had fallen *below* the 1957 level (wheat and cotton were down seven to eight percent, corn and sugar-beets by lesser amounts). While the Statistical Department has issued its usual optimistic reports of "local achievements" since the collec-

[10] First announced by Mr. Zhivkov in a speech of November 27, published in *Rabotnichesko Delo,* December 2, 1958; final reform decreed July 3, 1959.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.,* November 14, 1958. The same message has been reiterated many times since in official and press statements.

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tive merger drive began, past experience dictates a cautious attitude until more significant data are in—especially in light of a steadily increasing flow of contrasting complaints in the press over shortcomings, time-lags, incorrect interpretation of the new directives and lack of enthusiasm on the part of the populace.

Another of the fundamental weaknesses of the new program is that it contains virtually no provisions for giving the "toiling masses" some initial reward for the heavy new burden which has been placed on them. There has been a lot of theorizing about what should be done to bring the payment index into line with the new situation, but in the main promises have been vague and have been accompanied by the warning that substantial rises could be achieved only after the successful fulfillment of "the tasks necessary for the accelerated development of our socialist economy." Mr. Zhivkov's remarks in his theses on the question of labor remuneration made it clear that research and consultation would continue for several months, if not longer, before any steps at all would be undertaken to "reconstruct the labor payment system and secure fair and just improvements." The only interim concession made was a rise in the minimum wage limit for industrial workers from 400 to 600 levas a month (one dollar=6.8 levas at the official exchange rate). According to Mr. Zhivkov, the average industrial wage during 1958 was over 700 levas, meaning a large number of workers earn less. Collective farm workers get between 350 and 540 levas per month. The buying power of these wages may be judged from the sample prices of a pair of boots (150-330 levas), an overcoat (450-600), a suit of clothes (1,000). Further hardship is imposed by deductions from wages for national health and insurance, pension contributions, *etc.*

Among other obstacles to the leap is the decision to press married women into the labor force, ostensibly by suasive pressures.[13] This tactic—which has led to the voicing of such slogans as "Free the women from kitchen slavery, housework and the care of children"—is bound to be particularly offensive to the Bulgarians, who are traditionally a patriarchal people.

The Tide of Opposition

Greater than any of these specific obstacles—yet in part a product of them all—is the regime's problem in coping with indifference and even resistance to the new program, manifested both within party ranks and among the people at large. Despite its elaborate claims of a supporting "mass movement", the top leadership was the first to admit and to prepare its defenses against opposition to the leap. "Certain comrades," declared Zhivkov in his speech of November 11, 1958, "have incorrect conceptions: their failure to grasp the essence of what is being planned puts chains on the movement forward." In his later January pronouncement, he asserted that the foremost deterrent to success was "hesitation and lack of confidence in the realism of the task set, existing in certain leading cadres in the center and in the provinces."

Almost as harmful, by the regime's admission, is the related attitude of inertia which has overtaken many cadres and workers in the party and state machines. Attributing troubles of the past to "a large dose of passivity" in these quarters as well as to bureaucratic attitudes" and "conservatism," the leadership cited the need for a new spirit of "active planning," to be encouraged by engendering "an atmosphere of free, bold and creative discussion of the problems of socialist construction everywhere."[14]

Perhaps to set an example—but more probably to lend substance to its claim of mass support—the regime announced in January that the Zhivkov theses would be submitted for public "discussion and approval" throughout the country. Subsequently, according to *Rabotnichesko Delo,* more than 68,000 conferences and meetings were organized and attended by over 3,000,000 people.[15] It soon became apparent that more than a few "certain comrades" had objections to raise and were not averse to voicing them. On the day the program was formally endorsed (March 12) Georgi Traikov, Chairman of the Agrarian Union complained in a speech before the National Assembly:

We know that our class enemies, who are still not completely annihilated, and our opponents are also taking part in the discussion of theses. They want to confuse our working people and impede progress, and to reduce the nationwide enthusiasm to impotence, but their efforts are doomed.[16]

The above-mentioned report in *Rabotnichesko Delo* revealed that some 38,000 amendments to the new plans had been proposed during the "nationwide discussions" but nothing was ever said about what happened to them.[17]

Traikov, in his speech just quoted, went so far as to put some of the blame for contrary attitudes on disruptive propaganda disseminated by "various radio stations of the kind of Free Europe, The Voice of Amer-

[13] Zhivkov's speech of January 20, 1959.

[14] *Otechestven Front,* November 14, 1958.

[15] *Rabotnichesko Delo,* March 12, 1959.

[16] *Ibid.,* March 13, 1959.

[17] *Ibid.,* March 12, 1959.

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ica, and the like." In this connection it is interesting to recall a statement made by Zhivkov, in presenting his theses in January, concerning the attitude of some Bulgarians toward the United States. Appealing for support with the picturesque slogan, "When the trumpeter sounds his call, the first task of the soldier is to join his unit," he went on to hint that too many soldiers were facing the wrong way; in their view, "the American way of life is the best and an example which must be imitated, American techniques, culture and science are the best."

Throughout the spring numerous articles in the Bulgarian press indicated delays in getting the leap underway, under such titles as "Too much discussion, too few deeds" (*Chernomorski Front,* March 10), "In difference to projects of great economic significance" (*Narodna Mladezh,* April 11), "What is hindering the acceptance of the new plans?" (*Vecherni Novini,* May 14), "put an end to delaying" (*Burgaski Front,* June 9). At the same time there were numerous complaints of continuing passivity, bureaucratism and conservatism within the state and party machines, indicating that the call for "active planning" and "bold discussion" had as yet to be answered.

Low Moods in High Places

Against this background, an event of singular interest took place, showing that resistance to the leap existed not only on lower levels but at the very core of the party leadership. On March 15 it was announced that Mr. Boris Taskov, a member of the party Politburo and the Minister of Trade, had been summarily dismissed from his latter post for "failing to cope with his work." He was given a position as director of a Sofia railway-carriage factory, and there the story seemed to end. Later developments, however, confirmed the widespread belief that the actual motives for his discharge differed considerably from the official explanation. On April 21 Taskov was expelled from the Politburo; on June 20 the party organ *Partien Zhivot* published an editorial castigation which declared:

The man who does not believe in our party policy, who lives without faith in this policy, will not be successful in his work. If we cared to disclose the reasons why Comrade Boris Taskov failed in his work as Minister of Trade, we would find that one of them, and the most important, was his lack of conviction of the correctness of our party policy for rapid development of our country.

What followed was a clear indication, between the lines, of continuing widespread doubts and suspicions concerning the soundness of the "leap forward" plans:

The grandiose movements of the masses are characterized by great élan . . . and enthusiastic and creative labor. But on the surface of this stormy and irrepressible stream, dark bolts sometimes emerge—those who are hesitant and afraid. Even now there are individuals in the center and throughout the country who still work with hesitation and doubts about our party line. The unbelievers suggest that we reconcile ourselves to their pessimism, give in when facing difficulties, live placidly and serenely, and not see and make the best use of all potentialities offered to us by our socialist system.

The editorial ended with an exhortation for discipline at all party levels:

Any manifestation of doubt or any duplicity about a decision is harmful, because it undermines party unity. It is necessary to wage a merciless struggle against such manifestations.

This ominous tone was echoed on the same day (June 20) in the party paper *Novo Vreme*; complaining editorially that too many people still considered the drive for accelerated development unrealistic, the paper suggested that it was dangerous to express mistrust and to misunderstand the great revolutionary changes taking place. With an obvious allusion to dissension in the top echelons, the editorial went on:

Some of our comrades have a wrong attitude. The minority must observe the opinion of the majority. The party leadership and organization must be united, there must be no differences whatsoever and they must act as one body.

* * *

This, then, was the state of affairs six months after the launching of the "great leap forward." Having failed in its efforts to substantiate the mirage of a "mass movement" or even to evoke unified support within the party, the top command had resorted to the time-tried appeal for party discipline. Yet neither pleas nor coercion, it seems fair to say, are going to change the economic realities which underlie Bulgaria's present critical situation.

The summer months have brought no substantial change in the picture which has been outlined above. Indeed, some time will have to elapse before it will be possible—or fair—to judge the results of the "leap" effort. Certainly it can be said, however, that the present signs of dislocation in the economy are not attributable merely to problems of administrative adjustment; they bear witness to the heavy strain which has been imposed on the Bulgarian nation by a program which has taken into account neither the limitations of national economic and financial potential nor, much worse, the already depressed condition of the Bulgarian people.

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Taxes and the Soviet Citizen

By Leon M. Herman

EDITORS' NOTE: If there is a single myth that is most misleading—and at the same time most representative—of the Soviet "way of life," it is the myth assiduously propagated by Communist spokesmen about the virtual "absence" of personal taxes in the USSR. The latest refinement of this theme was undertaken by Nikita Khrushchev himself, when he announced that the negligible Soviet income tax would soon be abolished altogether. Yet the truth of the matter is that the Soviet state not only taxes its citizens but does it at a far heavier rate than any other modern industrial country, and in a manner which has long been repudiated by liberal, socialist and even (pre-Stalinist) Communist writers alike. How this taxation operates, what ends it serves, and how it is rationalized by present-day Communist theoreticians are the subjects discussed in the article below.

IN THE MANNER OF most nations around the globe, the Soviet Union operates its economy on a money basis. Goods and services are regularly paid for in currency, at conventional prices, regardless of whether they are exchanged between the government and the population or among the economic agencies of the state. In the course of discharging its functions, the Soviet government also incurs every year the standard "overhead" expenses for defense, administration, education, and other public services. Like its counterparts everywhere, the regime meets its budgetary problems with the time-honored solution of levying taxes on the population.

At this point however the similarity comes to an end. For in collecting revenue, just as in other matters of public policy, the Soviet government is unhampered by the constraints of political consent. The Soviet citizen has no voice in deciding how large his tax burden will be, nor has he anything to say about the methods of collection. In fact, he does not even know how much tax money he is paying at any given time because, unlike all modern states, the Soviet Union chooses to collect the bulk of its tax moneys through a system of indirect hidden taxation. Today, nearly 50 percent of all budget revenue, and 85 percent of all taxes on the population, is raised through excise taxes on goods sold to consumers in the stores.[1] The Soviet tax system is thus something of an iceberg: only about 15 percent rides above the surface, while most of the tax collecting operation takes place out of sight, in the form of a special mark-up over and above profits and distribution costs, on all goods sold to the population.

In token form an income tax still survives in the USSR. It provides currently less than 8 percent of the total revenue in the state budget,[2] and its fiscal role is thus quite negligible. But by displaying prominently the very low sums levied on income, and reporting them officially as the only tax moneys collected "from the population"—as opposed to the huge excise taxes collected "from the economy"—the Soviet regime has made the best of the income tax in the field of political propaganda And so, satisfied no doubt with the ingenious use to which the tax was put, the Soviet leaders have long watched the downward drift in the relative fiscal importance of direct taxation without any visible signs of interest.

It was left to an old political practitioner like Nikita Khrushchev to discover still another way of pressing the moribund income tax into political service. His plan, revealed in his seven-hour speech to the 21st Party

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[1] See annual budget report by Finance Minister A. Zverev in *Pravda,* December 23, 1958.
[2] *Ibid.*

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Congress, is quite simple. He intends to announce some time in the near future that the Soviet Union has found a way to dispense with this trivial item of budget revenue; and the action will be billed as "the end of the collection of taxes" in the USSR. Khrushchev's formal pronouncement on the subject reads as follows:[3]

Under present conditions the existence of taxes levied upon the population is unnecessary either from the point of view of its class significance . . . or from the point of view of securing revenue for the state budget of the USSR; the more so, as the share of taxes raised amounts to only 7.8 percent of budget revenue. All this will make it possible to give up in the next few years the collection of taxes from the population.

In the light of this startling treatment of the subject of "taxes," two questions are likely to arise in the mind of the reader interested in Soviet developments: (1) what is the actual tax burden of the Soviet citizen?; and (2) how much does he stand to gain by the reform so solemnly adumbrated by Khrushchev?

The Size of the Turnover Tax

Ever since the basic reform of the Soviet fiscal structure in September 1930 the principal source of tax money in the USSR has been the so-called "tax on turnover." This tax began its life as a modest special levy on all transactions involving the sale of consumer goods (there was an exception to the rule in that petroleum, a producers' good, was also made subject to the tax). The innovation proved a huge success, and it was soon extended to cover more ground, such as movie-house admissions, repairs, laundry, and other consumer services. In short, it gradually evolved into a universal excise tax and into "a means of withdrawing from circulation part of the wages and other payments made to the population." [4] This withdrawal, as will be seen later, has been carried out at a rather heavy rate.

With the aid of this new rich source of taxation, government tax receipts doubled in one year, rising from 6 to 12 billion rubles by the end of 1931. In due course, the government began to experiment with the tax rates, raising the levy on one commodity after another as much as the traffic would bear. The tax on bread, for example, went up in several successive steps from the original rate of 8 percent of the sale price in 1931, to 76 percent in 1934. While the price paid to the peasant for grain remained unchanged, the government raised the price of bread to the consumer from 12 to 50 kopeks per kilogram during this three-year period.[5]

As could be expected, yields from the turnover tax rose briskly during the first decade of its life. By 1940, they were nearly ten times as large as in 1931, namely 106 billion rubles; while average wages, during the same period increased only four-fold (from 84 to 338 rubles a month). Inevitably, too, the share of this tax in total government revenue increased conspicuously, so that by 1940 it accounted for 58.8 percent of all treasury receipts.[6] In 1959 the turnover tax is expected to yield 332.4 billion rubles, or 47 percent of total budget revenue.[7]

Economic Functions

From the standpoint of size alone, then, the turnover tax is important enough a phenomenon to merit a position of honor in the Soviet financial system. Its economic significance, however, is even more far-reaching. What gives the turnover tax its unique influence over the economic process in the USSR is the fact that it is employed as a device for subsidizing the state sector at the expense of the consumer sector.

More specifically, the turnover tax is deployed strategically to accomplish two basic objectives of Soviet economic policy. First, because it is levied almost entirely on consumer articles, the tax raises the price of all goods bought by the population, on the average, by roughly 100 percent over and above the full economic price. By sopping up purchasing power at this greedy rate, the turnover tax acts as a powerful break on consumption and enables the government to pursue its policy of heavy investment in the capital goods and armament industries with diminished inflationary pressures in the consumer market.

Secondly, this tax, though collected from the consumer sector, does its most "creative" work in the state sector.

[3] *Pravda,* January 28, 1959.

[4] R. W. Davies, *The Development of the Soviet Budgetary System,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1958, p. 216.

[5] A. Baykov, *The Development of the Soviet Economic System,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1950, p. 371.

[6] *Finansy SSSR* (Finances of the USSR), No. 9, 1958, p. 94.

[7] The revenue resources of the Soviet Government, as planned for 1959, may be summarized as follows: 1). The turnover (excise) tax: 332.4 billion rubles, or 47 percent of total revenue. 2). Direct taxes, chiefly the income tax: 56 billion rubles, or somewhat under 8 percent of total revenue. 3). Deductions from profits of state economic enterprises: 155 billion rubles, or about 21 percent of total revenue. 4). The remainder, some 24 percent of the total expected revenue, of 723.4 billion rubles, will be drawn from a group of minor revenue sources, such as the social insurance tax, the timber tax, the tax on collective farms, and others. See Zverev report, *loc.cit.*

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Just how this is accomplished may be briefly described as follows: Since the Soviet government exercises a virtually exclusive monopoly of both the economic and the political authority in the country—producing, taxing, pricing, and distributing all goods with very minor exceptions—it is under no obligation to show a profit on each individual product. Neither does it have to seek an economic return in full from any large group of products. All that is required for the purpose of general economic viability is that the sum of the prices of all goods sold by the state recapture the cost of production of all goods, plus a given margin of profit. The latter is needed, of course, for the replacement of outworn equipment and for further capital expansion. Within this broad framework of economic constraint, however, there is ample room to maneuver.

Having the power to do so, the Soviet government proceeds to over-price the goods sold to the consumer by approximately the amount by which it wishes to under-price the goods it sells to itself, namely capital goods and military matériel. This herculean task of "compensation," as some Soviet economists prefer to call it,[8] is carried out by the turnover tax. Its use has made it possible over the years to depress the share of consumer goods in total industrial output from 60 percent in the late 1920's to less than 30 percent at present.[9]

The Tax Bite

In its own way, the Soviet government pays a special tribute to the "strategic" character of the turnover tax by taking the utmost precaution to keep all details on specific rates out of the public view. The tax is therefore built into the sale price of each article before it is placed into retail channels. Only the total amount to be collected through this tax in the course of a year is made public. Beyond that, however, discussion of the subject is usually couched in broad, theoretical terms.

For information on actual tax rates we have to go to a few fragmentary figures released during the prewar years. According to this information, the turnover tax takes a specific "bite" out of every consumer ruble spent in the state stores. But the rates are extremely varied. Thus when the Soviet citizen buys such articles as beef, butter, or laundry soap, the final retail price he pays consists of 60 to 70 percent tax.[10] (A tax component of 60 percent of the selling price means, of course, in practice, that the basic economic price of the good is increased 2.5 times before it is placed into retail channels.) Other goods, such as sugar, salt, cigarettes, or vodka, are covered by a still heavier layer of tax, the latter making up as much as 70 to 88 percent of the retail price.

Some articles sold to the consumer, like yardgoods, shoes, and apparel, appear to escape with a tax bite of "only" 40 to 55 percent of the retail price. In fact, however, these articles are taxed twice, the first time upon emerging from the factory as intermediate products in the form of yarn, cloth, leather, *etc.,* and the second time as finished goods.

The taxing of admission tickets to the movies provides another illustration of indirect taxation in the USSR. The Russian movie-goer pays 3.3 rubles for attending an average urban movie house, which in terms of earning power represents almost one hour's wages of the average worker. In the US this cost would be the equivalent of about $1.75 for an average wage-earner. What makes the price so high is the fact that it is compounded of two charges. There is, first, the basic charge of 1.6 rubles, which represents the economic price of admission. As such, it already includes a profit for the government in its capacity as the owner of the movie house. The second, and larger, charge consists of 1.9 rubles of turnover tax, going directly into the coffers of the treasury for the strategic expenditures in the budget.[11]

Methods of Collection

For the Soviet government, the turnover tax has two prime virtues. It is relatively painless and it is easy to collect. Because it enters into the price of all goods behind the scenes, the taxpayer is spared the agony of counting out his tax money. The government at the same time saves on the employment of tax-collectors. The retail stores throughout the country serve as the tax-gathering agencies. And so long as all citizens, urban and rural alike, must come to the stores to buy their food, clothing, and other essentials, the tax will be collected in the process, approximately as planned in the fiscal offices of the government.

For his part, the Soviet citizen enters the state stores with currency that has already been pre-taxed. In the course of making his purchases, paying the tax-laden official prices, he automatically helps to implement the

[8] See *Voprosy Ekonomiki,* No. 2, 1957, pp. 91-2.

[9] *Promyshlennost SSSR* (Statistical Handbook), Moscow, 1957, p. 13.

[10] All rates cited in this section are from the basic paper by N. Jasny, "The Soviet Price System," *American Economic Review,* December 1950, p. 853.

[11] *Economic Bulletin for Europe* (UN-ECE), Geneva, May 1957, p. 98.

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government plan for recapturing a fixed proportion of the money placed in circulation. By the end of the year, when the balance sheet is drawn, it is easy to see what an impressive job of tax collecting is accomplished by the stores. In 1957, for instance, the retail trade network sold to the population a volume of goods valued at 625 billion rubles.[12] The tax component of these sales was equally imposing. Receipts from the turnover tax came to 276 billion rubles.[13] In other words, some 45 percent of all rubles paid out by the consumer at the stores went for the payment of excise taxes, and because of the surreptitious nature of this levy, no tax receipts were issued in the process. That, too, was all to the good; the morale of the consumer was spared possible injury, while the government saved on the cost of printing receipts.

With its heavy incidence on the necessities of life, the Soviet turnover tax is of course heavily regressive. The rates are by and large determined by two basic considerations: the revenue requirements of the government and the volume of consumer goods available for distribution. Whatever the budgeted expenditures, the turnover tax must supply the bulk of the revenue. If the volume of available goods in a particular year is expected to be relatively small, the rate of the turnover tax on each commodity is raised accordingly. This is in fact what happened in the years immediately following World War II. For four consecutive years, from 1947 through 1950, the state collected through the stores about 240 billion rubles of turnover tax annually, in spite of the meager amount of goods available for sale.[14] The claims of capital investment and armament were served to the hilt; the consumer got along as best he could.

That was austerity of a high order indeed. Since 1950, however, the tax share in retail trade has been drifting downwards, dropping from 78 percent in 1948 to 45 percent in 1957.[15]

[12] *SSSR v Tsifrakh* (The USSR in Figures), Central Statistical Administration, Moscow, 1958, p. 422.

[13] *Finansy SSSR* (Finances of the USSR), No. 9, 1958, p. 94.

Turnover Taxation in the USSR

	Retail Value of Trade (in billion rubles)	*Turnover Tax* (in billion rubles)	*Average Rate of Tax* (percent)
1940	175.1	105.9	60.5
1945	160.1	123.1	76.9
1946	247.2	190.9	77.2
1947	308.0	239.9	77.8
1948	332.0	247.3	74.5
1949	348.0	245.5	70.5
1950	359.6	236.1	65.7
1951	379.8	247.8	65.2
1952	393.6	246.9	62.7
1953	430.7	243.6	56.6
1954	481.9	224.3	46.5
1955	501.5	242.4	48.3
1956	547.0	258.6	47.2
1957	617.3	275.6	44.6
1958	668.5	301.5	45.1

Source: F. D. Holzman, "Taxes in the USSR," National Tax Journal, June 1957, p. 144. Data for last two years drawn from the Annual Report of the USSR Central Statistical Administration for the respective years.

The Elastic Ruble

The practice of injecting varying doses of excise tax into every article the consumer buys has the effect of distorting the ruble as a yardstick of value. As a result there is no way of finding a general purchasing power equivalent of the ruble in relation to any other currency. What the ruble buys in each commodity class will depend on the amount of tax the article is planned to raise.

Measured against dollar prices the Soviet worker's expenses for food and clothing abound with incongruity. Thus when he buys a pound of meat, or fish, tea or milk, the ruble buys as much as six cents would in the United States.[16] In the case of items like butter, sugar, and fruits, the purchasing power of the ruble is about three cents. In the non-food categories there is also extreme variation. When buying a shirt or nylon stockings, the Soviet citizen's ruble will command the value of only two cents. In the case of a suit, about three cents. The purchasing power of a ruble for shoes comes to four cents.

The following two examples may illustrate just how tax-packed ordinary articles of wear are in the Soviet Union. A delegation of the British weavers' trade union visiting the Moscow Oblast in September 1956 was questioned in private by a group of earnest Russian workers as to how many days they had to work to earn the suits they were wearing. The Russians' findings were startling indeed. As it turned out, the British weaver had to work 7½ days, the Russian 43 days.[17] To cite another example, a shoe salesman in the USSR earns during his workday one-tenth of the price of

[14] F. D. Holzman, *Soviet Taxation*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1955, p. 142.

[15] F. D. Holzman, "Taxes in the USSR," *National Tax Journal*, June 1957, p. 138-47.

[16] For price calculations in this paragraph see A. Nove, "The Purchasing Power of the Soviet Ruble," *Bulletin of the Oxford University Institute of Statistics*, May 1958, 188-89.

[17] *Report on Visit to the USSR* (September 16,-30, 1956), Amalgamated Weavers' Association, Lewis Wright, General Secretary, Manchester, 1956, p. 8.

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a pair of shoes (250 rubles)[18]. His American counterpart earns the full price of a pair in one day.

Of all consumer goods the durable variety is treated most favorably by the Soviet tax writers. But in this category, too, we find the usual range of diversity. Measured against dollar prices, musical instruments, for example, are lower-priced than cooking utensils; prices of television sets are more favorable to the consumer than the price of bicycles. Within the category as a whole, however, the ruble buys approximately as much as 11 cents would buy in the United States.

On the average, counting all the purchases he makes during the year, the Soviet consumer obtains from the ruble spent in the stores the purchasing power equivalent of 7.5 cents in the United States[19]. At this rate the average wage earner who receives 4 rubles per hour and spends 90 percent of his money through the stores earns the equivalent of 15 dollars weekly.[20]

So far, only the consumer's ruble has been considered. The story is quite different in the state sector. There, the ruble comes close to commanding as much value as the official rate of exchange claims for it. We know, for example, from recent public Soviet statements, that it takes only 3.5 times as many rubles as dollars to buy a tank. Similarly, as shown by the official price books, the price which the government pays for a ton of steel, coal, cement, or machinery also comes close to the official rate of exchange. Within the category of investment goods, the purchasing power equivalent of the ruble lies between 20 and 30 cents.

Embarrassment for Official Theorists

The problem of explaining the turnover tax has plagued official Soviet ideologists for a long time. The tax is much too unpleasant a device to extol as a great "socialist" innovation, and too important to ignore. It should be remembered that indirect taxes of this kind have long been recognized by Marxist and liberal writers alike as "regressive" and socially iniquitous, for a tax system that taxes all individuals at the same rate without regard to their earnings imposes a relatively heavier burden on low-income recipients by exacting a larger share of their income.[21] Most modern governments have therefore adopted the more equitable "progressive" tax structures—usually based on the income tax—under which tax rates rise progressively with increasing rates of income.

Lenin on Taxation

The richer the man the smaller the share of his income does he pay in indirect taxes. This makes indirect taxation *the most unjust form* of taxation. Indirect taxes are taxes on the poor . . . So the Social Democrats demand the abolition of indirect taxation and the introduction of a *graduated* tax on incomes and inheritances. "Graduated" means the higher the income, the higher the tax. . . . The richest pay the highest taxes. Such a tax, an income tax, or more exactly a *graduated income tax*, would be much fairer than indirect taxation.

—N. Lenin, "To the Rural Poor" (1903). Selected Works, International Publishers, New York, 1943, Vol. II, p. 283.

It is not surprising, therefore, that most of the "explanations" of the turnover tax found in official Soviet textbooks are tortured and farfetched. One can read, for example, that the turnover tax must not be compared to any other known levy because it is a unique form of "self-taxation," imposed by the workers, as the true owners of the wealth of society, upon themselves.[22] Another typical explanation will argue that the practice of singling out the consumer industries for such heavy-handed taxation is merely a matter of economy in collection, since plants in the capital goods sector are growing too rapidly.[23]

Writing on the same subject, the Soviet economist A. K. Suchkov argues that the government is justified in applying the heaviest tax rates to the food and light industries because of the shorter production cycle in these branches.[24] Hence, profit-taking can proceed at

[18] *Steel in the Soviet Union*, American Iron and Steel Institute, New York, 1958, p. 25.

[19] A. Nove, *op.cit.*, p. 189.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] The same policy of nominal equality, incidentally, is followed by the Soviet government in regard to rent. All occupants pay at the rate of 1.32 rubles per square meter, a charge that is admittedly below the cost of replacing any kind of housing today. The average citizen who now occupies 5.5 meters of space is thus not heavily burdened by rent, although he has to pay as much again for his utilities. Nor is he amply provided with living space. The real beneficiary is the high-paid functionary of the state. He gets ample space as well as the benefit of the low cost per unit of housing. See T. Sosnovy, "Rent in the USSR," *The American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol. XVII, April 1959, No. 2, pp. 174-81.

[22] For a detailed treatment of the whole subject of official explanations of the turnover tax, see F. D. Holzman, *op.cit.*, Chapter 6.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] A. K. Suchkov, *Ekonomicheskaia Priroda i osnovnye Printsipy Organizatsii Naloga s Oborota* (The Economic Character and Basic Principles in the Organization of the Tax on Turnover), Gosfinizdat, Moscow, 1951, p. 22.

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a more rapid pace. Still another explanation falls back on the old Marxian argument that only goods reaching the consumer through the market are depositories of exchange value, and thus "commodities." By definition, then, all capital goods produced by and for the state fall outside the sphere of "commodity" production and therefore beyond the reach of the taxing authority.[25]

Within the past few years, however, Soviet economists have been encouraged to discuss the problems of price formation in the USSR in more realistic terms. A few writers, for instance, have expressed themselves in favor of a more equal distribution of the turnover tax, and quite recently an official economic journal even admitted that some "practical workers" treat the turnover tax as a "universal excise tax."[26] But those who now attempt to treat seriously the economic function of the turnover tax tread very carefully and generally carry on their discussion in rather obscure language. Nevertheless, such meaning as does escape leaves no doubt that the turnover tax is essentially a scheme for depressing the cost of capital goods to the state. Here is a sample of the language in which the Soviet economist has recently tackled the effect of the turnover tax on prices:[27]

The essense of the matter is as follows: Prices of producers' goods include only part (the lesser part at that) of the money accumulation in the form of profits. The other part of the accumulation, designated in practice as a tax on turnover, does not as a rule enter into that price. At the same time, prices on consumer goods contain a higher level of monetary accumulation, taking the form of profits as well as tax on turnover.

While the meaning is unmistakable, the language is painfully abstract. We need, therefore, some concrete figures to illustrate this most important point. In 1955, the state extracted from industry a total amount of "surplus product" (savings) of 321.7 billion rubles, made up of 88.7 billions in the form of "profits" and 233 billions in "turnover tax." To this amount heavy industry, which accounted for 70.5 percent of all industrial goods produced in that year, contributed 53.4 billion rubles, or only 17 percent of the total amount skimmed off into the treasury.[28]

This high degree of favoritism toward heavy industry has evoked the following reaction from another prominent Soviet economist:

If prices in the capital goods sector were correlated with the value of goods, heavy industry should also have yielded about 70 percent of the value of the "surplus product" (savings) obtained through the prices of all industrial goods produced.[29]

In other words, we have here a tax that works wonders. By its magic, every unit of currency used by the government in payment for goods becomes a "privileged" currency, exempt from paying the full economic price. By the same token, every ruble paid out by the government to the citizen is "debased" in that the price of the goods it will buy is inflated by an extra amount of profit in the form of a turnover tax.

By any test of performance, the present system of extracting tax money from the economy has worked well for the Moscow rulers. So much so, that even the reform-bent Soviet Premier seems disposed to leave the basic scheme intact. All that Mr. Khrushchev proposes to do, in effect, is to add a further refinement. Instead of relying upon indirect taxes to the extent of 85 percent, as is the case now, he proposes to make it 100 percent—and call it "abolition of all taxes."

In substance, nothing will be abolished, nothing sacrificed. The 50 billion rubles a year now raised through direct taxes will be collected in some other way. It is clearly not a formidable figure. To collect it, the global volume of the turnover tax would have to be increased only modestly, by some 17 percent. As it is, the turnover tax collections have been inching upwards recently at the rate of 30 billion rubles a year. Surely from the viewpoint of the ruling New Class the prospect of governing a "taxless society" is worth the price of a modest boost in the present rates of the turnover tax. The Soviet public will simply have to learn to view this change in the same "correct" light.

[25] See recent series of discussion articles in *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, Nos. 2-3, 1957.
[26] *Finansy SSSR* (Finances of the USSR), No. 2, 1959, p. 37.
[27] D. D. Kondrashev, *Tsenoobrazovanie v Promyshlennosti SSSR*, (Price Formation in the Industry of the USSR), Gosfinizdat, Moscow, 1956, p. 52.
[28] Ya. Kronorod, "The Law of Value and the Problem of Price Formation in the USSR," *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 2, 1957, p. 87.
[29] *Ibid.*

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The Soviet Woman in Fiction

By Xenia Gasiorowska

EDITORS' NOTE: Miss Gasiorowska's article is the third in our series of reports on current Soviet literature as a reflection of Soviet reality (see "The Factory Manager in Soviet Fiction," by George Gibian, and "Soviet Youth in Life and Literature," by Vera Alexandrova, respectively in the March-April and July-August issues of this year). The series will conclude with discussions of village life and the nationality problem as depicted in recent Soviet fiction.

IT IS THE CONTENTION of writers and critics in the USSR that Soviet fiction is a faithful mirror of real life in Soviet-land. However, within the pale of socialist realism—the only officially accepted creative "method"—it is permissible for the writer to tilt the mirror so as to bring out certain features of reality and to foreshorten others. Indeed, to do so is part of his duty as ideological educator of the masses.

Thus adjusted, the literary reflection shows Soviet men and women engaged, under the guidance of the Communist Party, in the building of a new and happy world in an unrelenting struggle against the reactionary forces of the old. They have the word of Marx, Lenin and the contemporary party leadership that victory will be theirs, such being the law of History and Progress.

This thematic stress is always present. But the reflection is not a static one; the quality of lights and shadows and the intensity of the struggle fluctuate according to actual political developments. Thus a given period in Soviet literature is best considered within its political framework, and also in relation to the preceding period. The role of women as portrayed in fiction—which is the particular concern of this paper—will be examined by viewing the Soviet literary scene of the post-Stalin era in terms of elements of change or continuity inherited from the period following World War II.

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An Age of Grim Glitter

The years 1946-53, it will be remembered, marked an abrupt return to isolationism and ideological rigidity in the USSR, reflected in the Zhdanovite line of cultural chauvinism. Under pressure from above, literature focussed a brilliant light of praise on all things Soviet—people, society, morals, eventually even standards of living—while burying the rest of the world in the gloomy twilight of alleged economic or moral decay. This focus (subsequently denounced as a "varnishing" of reality[1]) endeavored to stimulate popular pride in Soviet accomplishments and to inspire further effort for the tasks ahead. Readers were expected to emulate fictional heroes and heroines, and in turn to become their living prototypes.

Thus, in numerous novels, on stage and on the screen, wartime was relived in stories stressing the military valor of the Russians (that of the Allies was never mentioned) and civilian contributions on the home front.[2] The arduous task of postwar reconstruction was outlined.[3] The role of the party, both in bringing about the victory and in husbanding its fruits, was highlighted. Stalin's deification proceeded apace. And noble feats were achieved by "the heroes of a new literature, the

[1] The reaction against Zhdanovite literature, preceding Stalin's death by a few months, was inaugurated by Malenkov's pronouncements on literature in his speech at the 19th CPSU Congress, October 1952.

[2] *E.g.*, B. Polevoy, *Povest o nastoiashchem cheloveke* (A Story About a Real Man), Moscow, 1949; V. Azhaev, *Daleko ot Moskvy* (Far From Moscow), Moscow, 1949.

[3] *E.g.*, G. Nikolaeva, *Zhatva* (Harvest), Moscow, 1951; A. Voloshin, *Zemlia Kuznetskaia* (Kuznetsk Land), Moscow, 1950.

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active builders of a new life — working men and women."[4]

The two sexes were partners, equal before the law, society and, evidently, even nature. Throughout the period under discussion women were depicted as successfully competing with men in economic productivity and efficiency, in patriotic dedication to duty, and in purely physical effort and endurance. Moreover, both men and women were completely engrossed in carrying out the current five-year plan, subordinating to its exigencies their personal lives and emotions. (Hence the "industrial" romances, built around the lovers' overfulfillment of the production norms, puzzling to the Western reader and eventually condemned as unrealistic in the Soviet Union itself.)

Yet civil rights and duties, as well as the economic independence achieved by women through hard work (Stalin was wont to refer to "the equality of the *trudoden,*" or salary base) did not quite bring about the equality of the sexes: a woman still had her home to take care of, a husband, children. While family life and motherhood were particularly encouraged in Stalin's time —witness the introduction of government subsidies and decorations for prolific "mothers-heroines"—neither was allowed to interfere with the building of socialism. Woman was too precious a source for the labor force.

Accordingly, the mirror of literature was adjusted to show that a model Soviet woman could combine the duties of a homemaker, wage earner and social worker—and excel in them all.

In the 1920's—the still unorganized days of Soviet literature before the advent of "socialist realism"—the famous literary heroine Dasha Chumalova sacrificed her child, her husband and her home in order to assert her rights as a socialist citizen.[5] A quarter of a century later there was no need for such an agonizing choice. The Communist leaders had long promised to liberate domestic slaves from the degradation of petty housework in the kitchen and in the nursery. Toward this end, the state had pledged to supply—in some indefinite future—communal kitchens, laundries, professional visiting housecleaners, even institutions for patching and darning clothes; model crèches and kindergartens were supposed to provide complete care for small children. Postwar fiction, taking advantage of its "right" under socialist realism to "see reality in its revolutionary development,"[6] simply assumed such facilities to be already in widespread operation.

Home Sweet Home

So, a dream-house—the embodiment of the Marxist promise to the housewives of the future—was erected within the enclosure of a purportedly realistic fiction. Tidy and comfortable, it was full of scrubbed, happy babies who somehow were never sick, and well-behaved older children whose school work was always perfect; plentiful meals were ready to be served on miraculously laundered tableclothes when mother returned home from work. Her good husband presented no problems: drunkards, wifebeaters, philanderers, loafers—so numerous in prerevolutionary Russian fiction—disappeared like a bad dream. Kind and helpful, a builder of socialism, to be sure, in his own right, the husband might have occasional relapses into mild domestic despotism, but such situations only served to enliven the anemic plots of an acknowledgedly "conflictless" literature; they also permitted the entrance upon the scene of the local party organizer *(partorg),* who resolved all difficulties with dispatch. Needless to say, women matched their mates in virtue, and so moral standards were portrayed as impressively high.

In this way, the women of fiction became free to work fully and dramatically outside the home and to live happily within it.

Almost any kind of job was hard. The work was conducted in an atmosphere of "socialist competition"—that is, at emergency speed and with maximum effort for higher output. Physical exertion was supposedly accompanied by a concentrated, tense dedication to the cause amounting to exaltation. This is particularly noticeable in the depictions of younger women. There are starry-eyed milkmaids who, by means of painstaking scientific feeding, make their cows yield fabulous amounts of milk.[7] There are *kolkhoz* girls who tirelessly experiment on raising unusual crops, rushing into hailstorms to pro-

[4] This concept, later endlessly reiterated, was first set forth by A. Zhdanov in his speech at the First Congress of Soviet Writers in August 1934; published as *Sovetskaia literatura—samaia ideinaia, samaia peredovaia literatura v mire* (Soviet Literature —the Richest [in ideas], the Most Progressive Literature in the World), Moscow, 1934.

[5] F. Gladkov, *Tsement* (Cement), Moscow, 1925. In this Soviet classic, the heroine Dasha, in trying to live up to her Communist ideals and to her concept of "a free Soviet citizeness," is openly unfaithful to her husband whom she loves, in order to assert personal freedom; deliberately neglects her home, dedicating all her time to social and party work; and puts her daughter in an orphanage, where the child dies of neglect. Such excessive zeal has subsequently been dubbed contrary to the concept of the Soviet family as the bedrock of Soviet society. Dasha, notwithstanding, became the pioneer of women's equality and largely the model of the New Woman in Soviet literature.

[6] Zhdanov, *op. cit.,* p. 12.

[7] *E.g.,* Niusha in V. Panova's *Yasnyi Bereg* (The Clear Shore), Moscow, 1950.

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tect them from ruin.[8] There are *Komsomol* girl students who, barred from the most dangerous work in the building of the Moscow Metro, smuggle themselves into the forbidden sector protesting discrimination. Girls work as miners, excavators, bricklayers, and they insist on their equality to men in physical as well as in moral stamina.

Older women compete with men as administrators and organizers. Gruff, middle-aged female *kolkhoz* chairmen are shown as particularly efficient in their quasi-housekeeping duties, quite undaunted by the scale of their responsibilities. The Soviet-educated intelligentsia—first introduced into fiction in the postwar period—contributes women with professional degrees, competently working in hitherto masculine positions in such fields as goldmining, shipbuilding, architecture.[9]

After several years of such literature, on the eve of Stalin's death, the world of Soviet fiction was inhabited by a permanent set of characters, moving through a standard plot within a uniform milieu. It was a tense world, spell-bound by a single political idea, subordinating all individual joys or tragedies to the goal of service to the state—a world primitive, gaudy and unreal, like a glossy illustration in a children's book. Then came "the thaw."

Advent of a New Era

There is no need here to discuss the changes in official policies and slogans following the death of Stalin. Yet, some of them, those influencing the everyday life of the Soviet people and thus the literature, should be recalled.

In the first place, there was a general relaxation of the tense labor tempo. The priority on production at any cost was reduced in the face of other considerations, both economic and social. Among policies announced (if not vigorously pursued) by the new regime were: curtailment of overtime labor and crash work at an emergency pace, giving workers more time to spend with their families; discouragement of management's routine practice of "padding" production records as a source of financial bonuses and awards; incipient steps toward the decentralization of industry and toward increased production of consumer goods to raise the standard of living.

As usual, literature was called upon to clarify and propagate the new government policy among the masses. Writers were encouraged to criticize the shortcomings of Soviet reality which previously had been considered nonexistent, while continuing to magnify its positive aspects in a more truthful vein. The milennium, the reading public was informed, had not yet arrived; much remained to be done, but it could be done in a less strenuous manner. Past mistakes, as is well known, were blamed on the cult of Stalin as an individual.

The writers' response was, at first, cautious—criticism had proved dangerous before—but, beginning with I. Ehrenburg's *The Thaw* (1954) which lent its name to the whole subsequent period, the trend gathered momentum and, culminating in V. Dudintsev's controversial *Not by Bread Alone* (1956), produced numerous works denouncing Soviet bureaucracy and sundry social and ideological vices.[10]

Literary Innovations

Two features seem to stand out as characteristic in the literature of the period: one is the shift of emphasis from the peasant and proletarian milieu to that of the intelligentsia; the second is the stress on personal emotions and feelings, resulting in a more natural presentation of life situations and consequently in a greater variety of characters and plot.[11] Hence there emerged a world of fiction recognizable to the Western reader as an image of a plausible, if unfamiliar, reality. Hence, too, the diversity of female characters increased because, while men still remained primarily builders of socialism, women could now be portrayed against the background of a believable home life as well as at work.

Both milieux profited in terms of art: the work scene was divested of some of its cumbersome technical descriptions; the home scene, conversely, began to be shown in considerable realistic detail. The *kolkhoz* and proletarian dream home collapsed in the process, revealing dismal living conditions and not infrequently lax morals.[12] At the same time, homes of bureaucrats and

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[8] *E.g.*, Grunia in E. Maltsev's *Ot vsevo serdtsa* (Heart and Soul), Leningrad, 1949; Lena in S. Antonov's "Lena," *Zvezda*, July 1948.

[9] *E.g.*, heroines in V. Ganibesov's "Starateli" (Prospectors), *Oktiabr*, March 1948; V. Kochetov's *Zhurbiny* (The Zhurbins), Moscow, 1952.

[10] Ehrenburg's *Ottepel* was first published in *Znamia*, May 1954; Dudintsev's *Ne khlebom yedinym* was serialized in *Novyi Mir*, August-October 1956. Other examples are V. Panova, *Vremena Goda* (The Seasons), Moscow, 1954; D. Granin, *Iskateli* (Those Who Seek), serialized in *Zvezda*, July-August 1954; A. Yashin, "Rychagi" (Levers), *Literaturnaia Moskva*, Vol. II, 1956.

[11] This applies to Soviet *belles lettres* rather than popular periodicals, which continue to carry feature stories and novelettes little changed since the days of "varnished reality."

[12] Witness workers' housing conditions shown in Ehrenburg, *op. cit.*, and Dudintsev, *op. cit.*, or *kolkhoz* life in S. Antonov, "Delo v Penkove" (It Happened in Penkov), *Oktiabr*, June 1956, and in M. Zhestev, *Pod Odnoi Kryshei* (Under One Roof), Moscow, 1955.

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professional intelligentsia became a common setting in literature, providing a well decorated stage for human drama.

Home—shopping, entertaining, meals, children, servants (the latter renamed "houseworkers" but performing the usual duties)—became the natural habitat of the Soviet housewife and one of the two centers of a career woman's life, the other, of course, being her place of work. Femininity regained its status, creating new rights as well as new problems for women. However dedicated to her profession a woman might be, the practical and emotional aspects of everyday life, the *byt,* were shown to mean more to her than they did to the average man. She was no longer characterized by the single, flat dimension of *stakhanovite* prowess, as was her immediate predecessor, but by the composite of her attitudes towards education, career, family, marriage, love. Love in particular regained its centuries-honored place within the plot, to the delight of readers who, as a literary critic admits, "have been starved for books about love."[13]

While certain of these trends which emerged in the thaw period have since been proscribed or modified at official behest (as will be discussed), others seem to have taken root as permanent features of post-Stalin literature. Happily the greater diversity of female characterizations has survived, though they are still patterned to a large extent after basic prototypes representing strongly "positive" or strongly "negative" figures.

Of Minks and Matrons

Among the new portraits in the literary gallery are the wives of the Soviet priviligentsia, most of whom do not work outside the home. When cast as negative characters, they lead the existence of contented drones, openly and arrogantly enjoying the good things of life provided by their husbands' position: mink coats, chauffeur-driven automobiles, one-family apartments (a rarity in Soviet city life). Significantly, it is not luxury that counts against them but their sloth: industrious homemakers, shown in identical surroundings, rate as positive characters because homemaking has been newly reinstated as a full-time, ideologically-respectable job, considered as much a social contribution as earning a living. Plump, placid and kindly, the good matron efficiently presides over her household, radiating comfort; under her care, the ideal domain emerges:

It was a family where there were many children, where everything was clean but untidy, where furniture was simple and inexpensive and food was served in big chunks.[14]

The "drones," catty, perfumed and heavily made up, are poor wives (one of Vera Panova's characters, for ex-

[13] V. Pankov, "Ya umru ot vas" (I Will Die over You), *Zvezda,* August 1955, p. 174. For some pungent examples of the new attitude toward love, see Walter Z. Laqueur, "The Thaw and After," *Problems of Communism,* No. 1 (Jan.-Feb.), 1956.

[14] Dudintsev, *op. cit.,* October issue, p. 68.

Сферы влияния бабушки и мамы. Папа сохраняет полный нейтралитет.

NEGATIVE MODELS

Caption: Grandmother's and mother's spheres of influence. Father retains full neutrality.

—From **Krokodil** *(Moscow), March 10, 1959.*

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ample, involves her husband in illegal profiteering which leads to his suicide) and poor mothers, serving as bad examples to their children, spoiled or neglected as the case may be.[15] The homemakers, sunny in nature and busy as bees, are wives and mothers *par excellence.*

Yet the homemakers, too—at least in the fictional image—somehow fail to create a warm spiritual relationship between themselves and their husbands and children.[16] The latter are respectful and obedient but seldom affectionate; the mother usually is pictured as handing them mugs of cocoa or good advice, but not understanding. It would be difficult to find an instance of a mother and daughter having a heart-to-heart talk about the girl's first romance. Thus filial love turns rather to the father, or even to a step-father, as in the case of the six-year-old Seriozha—a charming study in child psychology by Panova, one of the most gifted among Soviet writers.[17]

The health and physical comfort of husbands, the breadwinners and undisputed heads of the family, are matters of paramount importance to the homemakers. Yet these faithful, attentive helpmates, while admiring their husbands' professional talents and ideological zeal, do not really participate in their activities and interests. It is as if home absorbs them completely and limts them to practical mundane concerns.

The Ideal Helpmate

The women whom men find fascinating and understanding are the women who work. These are the real Soviet heroines of today, the flowers of fictional womanhood. Holders of professional degrees, they usually continue in their jobs after marriage, even though their husbands could support them and often would prefer to do so. There is, however, a distinction between the career women—usually childless—and what could be termed half-time homemakers. The latter treat their work conscientiously but matter-of-factly: it neither affects their lives (or the plot) nor takes precedence before their families. They are good housewives (the early ban on bourgeois coziness has long been lifted); they are good mothers as well, though since the eclipse of the dream house, children have been left in charge of grandmothers, kindergarten teachers or servants.

Yet first of all these women are excellent wives and faithful companions. Though useful workers in their own right (usually schoolteachers, sometimes physicians), they modestly seek the position of helpers to distinguished mates. They are ideologically discriminating as well as romantic; they choose only selfless knights of Progress and cannot love lesser men. When Lena in *The Thaw* realizes that her husband, a plant director, is a heartless bureaucrat, she leaves him for an idealistic engineer. So does Nadia in *Not by Bread Alone,* who sacrifices everything—from mink coat to good reputation—for her lone wolf of an inventor, a dreamer too engrossed in fighting for his machine even to appreciate her devotion properly. Finally, he asks her to marry him, warning that his fight is not over yet:

"Aren't you tired?" he said, "What if I tell you: let us continue our journey?" Nadia did not answer, she only came nearer—and disappeared, because she did not actually exist, she was only a small clear stream, which he could use for drinking and refreshing his face on his hard journey.[18]

When these women are lucky enough to meet and marry their heroes early in life, they are spared the tragedy of breaking up a home. In either case they accept the fact that they must adjust their lives to their loved one's pattern. The typical circumstance is portrayed in "The Wife of Him Who Strides Forward."[19] The hero is a building engineer in charge of an impressive mechanical excavator, which "strides forward" just as its master does. Whenever one building project is finished, the family and the machine together move deeper into undeveloped parts of the USSR to start another. Ania, his teacher wife, will forever raise her family in temporary huts, will never own a piece of furniture; she will always be on the move, teaching in unorganized schools—and she accepts this gladly, because her husband's work matters more than anything or anyone else. The author drives the point home:

Sisters mine—we all are wives of those who stride forward. Brides of fliers and miners. Mothers of soldiers and geologists. Daughters of sailors and foresters. We are all wives of those striding forward.[20]

The Dedicated Careerist

The career woman, of a different cast, represents an interesting stage in the development of the "emancipated" female in Russian literature. She is, moreover, an unusual fictional character, a woman to whom work means as much as does her personal life. She holds a

[15] *E.g.,* Mmes. Ganicheva in Dudintsev, *ibid.,* and Bartoshevich in Panova, *Vremena Goda.*

[16] *E.g.,* Katia Bakhireva in G. Nikolaeva's *Bitva v puti* (Battle on the Way) first serialized in *Oktiabr,* March-July 1957.

[17] Panova, *Seriozha,* first published in *Novyi Mir,* September 1955.

[18] Dudintsev, *op. cit.,* October issue, p. 98.

[19] E. Uspenskaia, "Zhena shagaiushchevo," *Novyi Mir,* January 1958.

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 45.

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man's job (usually that of a production engineer or a research scientist) and braves the difficulties which accompany a job in a basic Soviet plot: as an innovator, she has to fight reactionary elements in her work—and she invariably wins.

Her dedication to work does not detract from her femininity—she is lovely, soulful, passionate—it actually enhances her charm. The contrast between her physical smallness and weakness and her spiritual strength appeals to the hero. Tense, tired, yet valiant and efficient, in working clothes stained with grease or chemicals, she is at once an inspiring colleague and a touchingly fragile woman calling for masculine protection and love.

Significantly, marital complications have become almost as important to the plot as professional problems. Since both lovers are married to dull but good spouses, tragedy ensues, particularly when children are involved. It should be stressed that the romance is always a matter of deep love, not a passing flirtation, and fascinated readers have been presented of late with a Soviet version of the classical conflict: love *vs.* duty. Whichever wins, somebody is bound to be hurt, and—a double novelty in Soviet literature—there are many variants of the unhappy ending.

Tina's lover returns to his wife for the sake of preserving a home for their three children; Varia's lover marries her after a double divorce and at the cost of losing a beloved teenage daughter; Doctor Arzhanov leaves his second young wife and child for Larissa; Elena refuses to marry the man she loves but cannot respect, even though her own marriage has been broken by their liaison.[21] Whatever the circumstances in each case, the unhappy heroine or the unloved wife has one solace: work. It means less to the latter, since she is primarily a homemaker, but it comforts her, as religion once did. To the career woman work also offers the means for a clean break with the past through a change of environment: a broken-hearted heroine of prerevolutionary Russian literature might take the veil; today she accepts a job at some factory or center thousands of miles away.

Generally, the working women from the intelligentsia are perhaps the most human of Soviet characters and are drawn with greatest psychological insight. They are strictly Soviet creations, not readily comparable to the familiar heroines of western fiction. They are neither militant *garçonnes,* because there is no need for them to assert their equality in matters of profession or sex; nor *femmes fatales,* because their tragic affairs depend on their lovers' personalities, not on theirs. They are never shown as frustrated, or neurotic, or promiscuous, the reason being—critics insist—the salubrious atmosphere of Soviet society and—authors convey—their constructive attitude towards their work. Within the limits of the prescribed pattern, however, the emotional life of these women is adequately and often convincingly projected; they are certainly free from the wooden enthusiasm with which their recent literary predecessors used to overfulfill their *kolkhoz* or factory norms.

The Ingenues

Young love in Soviet fiction seldom becomes the center of the plot: its path is too smooth, too free from the traditional romantic obstacles. Parental approval is desirable but not indispensable and in any case is seldom refused; financial considerations do not enter the picture because both young people will get jobs, a room in a communal apartment, and will start their married life on a shoestring, whatever their parents' social status. Thus, once they meet and fall in love, there remains nothing to do but marry and live happily ever after, unless the author deliberately creates some difficulties in order to keep the plot alive. His resources, however, are limited and usually consist in one of the lovers' temporarily falling in love with somebody else. The end is invariably happy. As was ironically observed at the height of the "thaw" period, the established formula for true love has remained unchanged: "Love," a *komsomol* girl secretary didactically explains, "is physical attraction combined with a community of social and cultural interests."[22]

Young girls in Soviet fiction represent its version of traditional *ingénues.* They are demure and attractive though seldom great beauties (beautiful girls tend to become coquettes and are usually cast as negative characters); they are enthusiastic for and conscientious in their studies, *komsomol* duties or professional jobs. Most often they are pictured in some remote provincial town or village. In spite of the exalted status of the Soviet family, these girls are shown primarily as products of Soviet society, for they grow up ideologically and morally perfect whether in a happy home, or as daughters of corrupt or over-indulgent parents, or in an orphanage.[23]

They are nice girls, and well behaved; one is almost tempted to use the word "sheltered" in spite of their

[21] Respectively in Nikolaeva, *op. cit.;* S. Aleshin, "Odna" (Alone), *Teatr,* August 1956; A. Koptiaeva, *Derzanie* (Daring), serialized in *Oktiabr,* March-May 1958; and K. Lvova, *Elena,* in *Almanakh God 38-oi, No.* 19, 1955.

[22] A. Volodin, "Fabrichnaia devchonka" (Factory Girl), *Teatr,* September 1956.

[23] Respectively, Tonia in Kochetov, *op. cit.;* Katia in Panova, *Vremena Goda;* Ania in Uspenskaia, *op. cit.*

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hard and often dangerous working conditions. However equal to boys in education, work and civil rights girls may be, and however high, allegedly, the moral standards of all Soviet youth—a really good girl is supposed to be chaste, modest and shy and as such, a man's moral superior. The "thaw" revealed the existence in Russia of juvenile delinquents and of the *stiliagi,* the Soviet counterparts of "Teddy boys," but except for a few victims of dashing seducers,[24] Soviet girls are *ingénues.*

Serious-minded and hard-working, young girls also enjoy sports, movies and dancing—while they can, because once married, Soviet heroines become too engrossed by their adult joys and sorrows to partake of much outside entertainment. Bashful girls and wide-eyed innocents seem to be great favorites with literary critics and readers. The public recognition earned by Dasha, who considered herself engaged to a boy because she let him hold her hand in a movie theater (she marries him, too!) provides a fair example; the more down-to-earth Zhenka unleashed a storm of argument in the press and at readers' conferences.[25]

Post-Thaw Shifts

After Khrushchev's speeches in 1957, advising comrade writers "not to disrupt the common ranks by marching out of step" and to stop "rooting in garbage pits" for samples of Soviet reality, the literary mirror was once again readjusted.[26] There has not as yet been a return to "varnished reality"; outspoken criticism and the human interest element stay in evidence. But, side by side with the life of the intelligentsia, that of the workers has reappeared in fiction, and there is a new stress on the spirit of fraternization and on intermarriage between classes; characters and plots have begun to set again into discernible patterns, more primitive than those of yesterday; and the ideological conflict between the New and the Old is again conducted primarily by men, with women acting as an auxiliary force.

The accent is on old-fashioned femininity, stressing the respectable average in preference to sophisticated glamor. The contrast is seen in two prominent recent novels: G. Nikolaeva's *The Battle on the Way* (first published in 1957) and V. Kochetov's *The Brothers Yershov* (1958). The magazine version of *The Battle on the Way* stars Tina, a woman engineer, the elegant, talented, lovely, twice-married heroine of a passionate love affair ending in tragic renunciation. Author Nikolaeva, preparing the novel for publication in book form in 1958, had to subdue Tina's glitter and suppress her first husband because, it was pointed out, the existence of *two* former unhappy marriages could make the reader doubt the nobility of her character and the sincerity of her new attachment.[27] On the other hand, Iskra, also an able engineer, is a faithful wife and loving mother; author Kochetov describes her through an admirer's eyes as:

about five feet tall; eyes small, black, snapping [she also wears glasses]; a snub nose; solid little legs, not too shapely . . . a little monkey in belted overalls, rather plump though small-waisted.[28]

[24] *E.g.,* Lera in V. Lapin, *Prostaia istoriia* (A Simple Tale), serialized in *Znamia,* May-June 1958.

[25] Respectively Nikolaeva, *op. cit.,* and Volodin, *op. cit.*

[26] N. Khrushchev, "Za tesnuiu sviaz literatury i iskusstva z zhizniu naroda" (For a Close Tie Between Literature and Art and the Life of the People), *Kommunist,* No. 12, August 1957, pp. 11-29.

[27] V. Ozerov, "Sovremennaia zhizn i sovremennaia literatura" (Contemporary Life and Contemporary Literature), *Oktiabr,* December 1958, p. 121. Frequently Soviet works of fiction first appear in installments in principal literary magazines and, following critics' evaluation, are considerably revised before publication in book form.

[28] V. Kochetov, *Bratia Ershovy* (The Brothers Yershov), serialized in *Neva,* June-July 1958, June issue, p. 14.

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Overalls are, of course, acceptable, but a heroine should look neat at all times, and critics now voice disapproval of girl miners' wearing canvas uniforms twice their size or girl truckdrivers' having untidy hair and dirty, broken fingernails.[29] Hair, incidentally, is worn long, though Dudintsev's girls in *Not by Bread Alone* and Nikolaeva's Tina featured short hairdos.

A startling recent development, with repercussions for literature, has been a press campaign against hard physical labor for women; journalists have been stressing that such work should be left to men. Consequently:

[Literary works] should not approvingly feature tomboys and thus foster in youthful minds erroneous ideas about every profession being right for women. . . . [A woman's] great calling as a mother and educator of her children is unfortunately seldom remembered . . . girls doing men's work sometimes try also to emulate them in other things, learn to smoke, don't even mind drinking.[30]

There also has been some discussion in the press on the necessity of revising divorce laws and improving the situation of illegitimate children. The first of these concerns is reflected in literature by the return of happy endings to marital dilemmas and the increasing severity of moral standards. That there is no mention of the second is due to Soviet fiction's traditional reticence about certain matters considered morally shocking. There have been, for example, no prostitutes in Soviet literature since the arrival of "social realism," not even good-hearted souls like Nancy in *Oliver Twist,* and scarcely any unwed mothers. Legitimate love, though, both Young and Married, and family life, are certain to stay in focus.

The Truth in Fiction

Can a non-Soviet reader, like Alice visiting her strange wonderland, enter Soviet reality through the looking-glass of literature? The answer, socialist realism notwithstanding, seems to be in the affirmative. Living conditions can be discerned through story details when one learns how to ferret out fact from officially-inspired fantasy. If, for example, at the height of the "varnishing" period we see one *kolkhoz* girl checking her field of experimental wheat in silk stockings and patent leather pumps, while another sends a love letter in an envelope cut out of newspapers and sealed with moist black bread, then—given common sense and what we know of the consumer goods situation—it is fair to assume that the first image is a deliberate invention, while the second offers an inadvertent glimpse of truth, a circumstance which struck neither author nor censor as unusual.

In the matter of manners and morals, the projections of literature undoubtedly reflect prevailing popular attitudes and standards of behavior. Since, for instance, positive female characters generally are depicted as chaste girls and faithful wives (exceptions being treated as personal tragedies), we can assume that the ideal of old-fashioned virtue, if not always the practice, has triumphed in Soviet society over the early postrevolutionary slogan of women's "sexual emancipation." Similarly, the featured ideal of hard work is a valid reflection of the Soviet social climate. Letters to the editors of literary magazines, feature stories, discussions of new fiction at readers' conferences, all seem to confirm that work—dedicated, unselfish, conscientious work— has indeed been firmly established as the leading virtue of Soviet men and women.

Work then, and home, family and state. A Russian woman's life is no longer contained, as an old proverb had it, "between the stove and the threshold." She has, in theory, become what Dasha Chumalova longed to be—"a free Soviet citizeness." Yet one wonders whether, in spite of her much advertised social, economic and educational equality, a woman's lot in Russia still is not harder than a man's. So far, she has not been relieved of her family duties: the care of children, shopping, cooking are still her responsibilities and—unless the economic planning system achieves a more intensive utilization of manpower, relieving women from the labor force and/or the promised boarding schools and inexpensive restaurants materialize—Soviet women will continue to carry their double load of homemaking and wage-earning.

The flattering principle, much stressed of late, of high respect due to gentle femininity, involves on the part of the woman a very exacting standard of modesty, purity and a readiness to assume a subordinate position to man at home and at work. Hard work is still the ideal, but the career woman dedicated to her job alone does not cut the figure that she did a few years ago. In fact and in fiction a wife's career—whatever position she holds—is today generally considered secondary to her husband's.

Altogether, it would appear that Soviet fictional heroines are a fairly accurate reflection of their living prototypes. The conception in socialist realism that the average Russian strives toward the ideal of perfection may be viewed with a certain skepticism; yet in the case of the female sex, the ideal turns out to be the average: the Soviet woman—industrious, unspoiled and unglamorous—seems to meet the specifications of her situation in life.

[29] Examples are Sima in Ya Ilichev, "Gordaia Lubov" (Proud Love), *Zvezda,* June 1957, and Anka in A. Kuznetsov, "Shofer s kosami" (Driver with Braids), *Rabotnitsa,* No. 10, 1957.

[30] V. Nemtsev, "Slovo o nashikh zhenshchinakh" (A Word About Our Women), *Literaturnaia Gazeta,* No. 82, 1958.

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Communism and the African Negro

By David T. Cattell

THE GROWING FORCE of nationalism in Africa, which already has won independent status for a number of former African colonies of the European powers, has spurred the emergence of a new and keener interest in that continent on the part of Soviet bloc political strategists. In the bloc capitals, Africa's entry into a phase of sweeping political change under the banner of nationalist revolution is obviously viewed as opening up rich opportunities for Communist penetration of the continent, and it has already inspired a steady build-up of bloc diplomatic and propaganda activity designed to woo the newly-independent African nations and to establish Communist influence in the African nationalist movements generally. But while these efforts have scored some success in the area of economic diplomacy (trade pacts and economic aid agreements), there is as yet little evidence to indicate that communism itself has succeeded in becoming an effective force within African nationalism. It is into the reasons for this latter failure —in part historical, in part of a more immediate political, social, and psychological nature—that the present article proposes to inquire.

Viewed in broad historical perspective, Moscow's present active interest in Africa is an extremely recent and unprecedented development. In Tsarist times, the traditional objectives of Russian imperialism lay farther eastward, and except for the cultivation, in the 19th century, of cooperative relations with Ethiopia—now revived in a new form by the Soviet-Ethiopian loan agreement concluded during Emperor Haile Selassie's recent Moscow visit—the Tsarist regime showed no inclination whatever to become involved in expansionist ventures on the African continent. Nor did the advent of Bolshevik rule bring any practical change in this attitude.

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"Asia First" Policy

To be sure, the leaders of the new regime, even while engaged in a precarious struggle for survival, were quick to discern the potential value to the Communist cause of nationalist movements in the colonies of the capitalist powers and in "semi-colonial" countries such as China. Accordingly, the Second Comintern Congress in 1920 formulated a basic strategy for these areas, calling for Communist collaboration with indigenous "national liberation" movements with the objective of bringing them under Communist control.[1] The Congress "theses" outlining this strategy were framed in general terms and evidently intended to be applicable—except for a difference in timing—to both Asia and Africa. From the very first, however, Asia assumed the dominating place in Soviet and Comintern efforts to implement the Second Congress strategy, while Africa was relegated to an insignificant "back-seat" position which it continued to occupy until well after the close of World War II.

Thus, the 1920's saw the Comintern funnel energy and resources into widespread activities in Asia, the most important of which was its ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to capture control of the Chinese nationalist revolution. In sharp contrast to this concrete action in Asia, Soviet and Comintern leaders displayed little more than an abstract, theoretical inter-

[1] "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions Adopted by the Second Comintern Congress," in J. Degras (ed.), *The Communist International, 1919-1943 — Documents,* Oxford University Press, London, 1956, Vol. 1, p. 138 ff.

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est in Africa. The African "toiling masses" were regarded as playing a part in the Marxian historical process of ever-intensifying "contradictions" within the imperialist camp, and were usually included in generalized expressions of Communist solidarity with the colonial populations: *e.g.,* Stalin's reference to the "hundreds of millions of Asiatic and African peoples . . . suffering national oppression in its most savage and cruel form."[2] Rarely, however, was there any specific discussion of the prospective revolutionary role of the African masses, or of Communist policy and tactics for Africa. Stalin's own writings aptly illustrate this point in that, despite his particular interest in the "national and colonial questions," they make specific mention only of Morocco and North Africa.[3]

There were other evidences of Soviet indifference toward Africa. Although the Bolshevik regime had lost no time in setting up a special "University of the Toilers of the East" in Moscow to serve as a Mecca and indoctrination center for Asian Communists, it had obviously given no thought to broadening the institution's scope to embrace Africans also, or to providing similar special facilities for them. Actually, no more than a couple of dozen African students went to Moscow for indoctrination, and in the absence of any special African school they were admitted to the Asian "university." A much smaller number of Africans worked in the Comintern organization itself, while there was also a minor degree of participation by African representatives in the activities of the International Conference of Negro Workers, a front organization established under Communist auspices.

At first, Communist propaganda appeals for Negro support were aimed primarily at the Negro population in the United States and centered around a program demanding racial equality and equal citizenship for all persons of African origin. In 1928, however, this program was abruptly scrapped by the Comintern in favor of a new line embodying Stalin's concept of self-determination for Africa in the form of a native African republic. Dubbed the "black republic doctrine," the new line was promulgated over African Communist objections and encountered resistance from both Negro and white party followers. It was nevertheless reaffirmed by the Comintern in 1930, and those African Communists who still opposed it were purged the next year.[4]

After 1934, the Soviet Union began trying to bolster itself against the threat from Nazi Germany by seeking collective security agreements with the European democracies, and in order not to prejudice this effort even the half-hearted and ineffectual efforts that the Comintern had been making to promote communism in Africa were allowed to languish.[5] Except for a short-lived revival during the interlude of the Nazi-Soviet pact (1939-41), this state of quiescence continued until after the end of World War II.

Postwar Development

In the wake of the war, as relations between the Soviet Union and its erstwhile allies steadily deteriorated, Moscow once again turned to the colonial areas in its search for weak links in the West's armor. The impact of the war had given a tremendous impetus to the forces of nationalism not only in Asia, but in Africa as well, and the colonial powers found themselves confronted by increasingly insistent demands for the grant of independence to their Asian and African colonies. The Soviet Union, through its representatives on the UN Trusteeship Council and Fourth Committee, seized every opportunity to press these demands as a means of embarrassing the colonial powers and exacerbating their relations with the colonial peoples.

Though the Soviet maneuvers in the UN may have been effective in terms of these objectives, they did not, however, result in any upsurge of Communist strength in Africa. Such scattered local movements as existed remained, with few exceptions, small and insignificant. Perhaps the major exception was French West Africa, where the Communists, by virtue of the fact that they then were participating in the French home government and commanded large electoral and trade union strength in France, were able to ally themselves with the leading French West African political movement, the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* (RDA). The RDA, however, broke off the alliance in 1950, and a marked decline in Communist influence set in. At about the same time, the South African CP, which had long been the largest Communist organization in Africa, was outlawed and forced to go underground, which effectively curbed its propaganda and recruiting activities even if it did not destroy the party.

[2] J. Stalin, *Sochineniia* (Works), Vol. VI, p. 138.

[3] *Ibid.,* Vol. IX, p. 323; Vol. VII, p. 146.

[4] George Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism?,* London, 1956, p. 351; William Z. Foster, *The Negro People in American History,* New York, 1954, pp. 478, 557-9; Edward Roux, *Time Longer than Rope,* London 1948, p. 264.

[5] There were no organized Communist Parties in tropical Africa, and although one was claimed to exist in South Africa, it boasted only 400 members in 1928, of which only 50 were Negros or colored. (*The Communist International Between the Fifth and Sixth World Congresses, 1924-28,* London, 1928, p. 491.)

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In spite of the fact that the years between 1950 and 1955 witnessed increasing Soviet awareness of Africa's importance[6] and stepped-up propaganda efforts in that area, it was still being acknowledged at the beginning of 1956—as one Soviet writer put it—that "Communist parties are far from existing in all parts of Africa."[7] The usual Communist rationale explains this failure in terms of the lack of a proletarian base and the traitorous action of the national bourgeoisie in selling out to the imperialists. On the other hand, the prevalent Western view with regard to the factors determining Communist prospects in Africa is reflected in the following passage from a 1956 English study of African nationalism:

Communism is not yet an effective force within the African national movements, whose leadership is predominantly middle-class, both in social background and outlook. In French West Africa, the French Cameroons, and the Sudan, Marxist ideas and Communist groups have some influence, mainly within the trade union movements—but not elsewhere. There are, however, undoubtedly factors in the African situation which could assist the growth of communism as an organized force—increasing proletarianization, land-hunger, economic differentiation among the peasantry, the denial of constitutional channels for nationalist agitation with military and police repression, corruption. . . .[8]

While one need not comment on the Communist explanation, the view just cited merits closer examination. In the present writer's opinion, this common Western interpretation, in relating Communist failure or prospective success entirely to factors of class antagonism and economics, does not really get to the heart of communism's inability to make greater headway in Africa to date. After all, most of the factors cited as favoring future Communist growth already existed in the past without nourishing communism; why, then, should they do so in the future when one of the major grievances of the African peoples, colonial domination, will be undergoing a process of gradual elimination? In the writer's judgment, the fundamental problem for the Communists has not been, and is not now, one of effectively exploiting economic and social grievances. Rather, it is one of finding a way to identify communism and its philosophy with the aspirations of African nationalism.

Communism and Nationalism

Certain factors seem favorable to Communist efforts in this direction. Most of the present African political leaders, at one time in their careers, were strongly influenced by Marxist ideas, and some even joined the Communist movement. This is not surprising in view of the European educational background of many members of the group. Studying at the London School of Economics or some other West European university, they were impressed by the quick, conclusive answers provided by the Communist dialectic to the problems of a small national élite seeking independence and greatness for its people. This dynamic appeal was reinforced by the fact that the African was more readily accorded social acceptance in Marxian-oriented groups. (In recent years, of course, these influences have been multiplied as a result of the growing number of Africans studying in East European universities.)

Upon returning home, the European-educated African usually took one of two courses: either he entered the colonial government service, or he acquired one of the few academic and professional jobs available and/or entered the leadership of local labor or native political organizations. In the first case, he came under the predominant influence of French or British civil service tradition; however, except in British West Africa, the number of Africans taken into government service was small because of the reservation of the more important positions for Europeans. In the second case, he was more apt to undergo further exposure to socialist or Communist influences, especially in French West Africa where the Communists dominated the labor field and, at least until 1950, were also strongly entrenched in the RDA.

However, since World War II, the rival socialist-communist and liberal-democratic influences upon African political thinking have all been overshadowed by the much stronger force of nationalism. It has become so to speak, the basic premise and starting point of African political thought. Because of this, the success of any political movement in Africa, be it Communist, Socialist, or liberal-democratic, depends upon its relationship to nationalism—that is, upon its ability to

[6] This was indicated by an increase in the volume of published Soviet studies on Africa. For lists of such studies published since World War II, see: *Uglublenie Krizisa Kolonialnoi sistemy imperializma posle vtoroi mirovoi voiny: rekomendatelnyi ukazatel literatury* (The Deepening Crisis of the System of Colonial Imperialism after World War II: A Bibliography of Recommended Literature), compiled by the Lenin Library, Bibliographical Division, Moscow, 1955; and Christopher Bird, "Soviet Ethnographic Research on Africa," *Africa Special Report*, Vol II, Nos. 9 and 10.

[7] I. Potekhin, "The Political Situation in Africa," *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie*, No. 1, 1956, p. 25.

[8] Thomas Hodgkin, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa*, London, 1956, p. 188.

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contain or ally itself with this all-pervading force in African life.

The Communists would appear to be in an especially advantageous position in this regard. For one thing, the leadership of African nationalism has been supplied primarily by leaders of the labor groups, where Communist and socialist influences are strong. For another, communism's apparent advantages for underdeveloped countries as a system permitting rapid economic growth make it strongly appealing to African nationalists who see in speedy material advancement a panacea for all of Africa's ills, and for whom "catching up" economically has become a slogan as much as it has in the Soviet bloc. Also, African nationalism has very little of the spiritual quality characterizing some of the south Asian nationalist movements, but is patterned more after Arab nationalism, which has proven vulnerable to Communist inroads. Finally, many African leaders have been attracted by the organizational qualities and authoritarianism of the Communist system.

Despite all this, it is now quite evident that a good many African nationalist leaders who at one time professed support of Communist policies — Kwame Nkrumah, now Prime Minister of Ghana, is a notable example—did so solely out of belief that it would serve them as an effective tactical weapon against the colonial powers in the struggle for independence. The best proof of this lies in the steps already taken by the governments of Ghana, the Sudan, and Nigeria, since their acquisition of independence, to crush the Communists and prevent party sympathizers from obtaining positions of power. Another numerous group of nationalist leaders apparently gave their support to the Communists because they were in agreement with many Communist ideas and tactical policies, but later withdrew it rather than be forced to go all the way and accept the supremacy of Moscow.

Propaganda Boomerang

One reason why the Communists, despite all the factors in their favor, still did not succeed in inducing the African nationalist élite to accept any firm and lasting identification with communism is to be found in their own past mistakes in the areas of propaganda and strategy. The most effective weapon in the Communist propaganda arsenal for Africa has always been the time-tested anti-colonial line, which played upon the exploitation of the colonial areas by their European masters, and stressed the USSR's unfailing support of national independence both in and outside the UN. On the other hand, the more recent concentration of the Communist propaganda attack on the United States rather than the European colonial powers—using the devious argument that American support of independence for the African colonies is merely to pave the way for their subjection to U. S. "economic imperialism"—has not been sympathetically received by the African intelligentsia. The focus of their hostility has always been the European colonial powers, while their attitude toward the United States (as toward the Soviet Union) has been ambivalent—on the one hand, tending toward suspicion of American actions, particularly when they involve close relations with the colonial powers of Europe; on the other, inclining toward friendly admiration of the United States as the fountainhead of the movement for freedom. The All-African People's Conference at Accra in December 1958 strikingly demonstrated this ambivalence. The conference's final declaration proclaimed that Pan-Africanism is "inspired by the example of the thirteen American colonies"; yet, one of its resolutions condemned NATO and its economic arm, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), as manifestations of "military and economic colonialism."

In any event, to Africans the United States is not the No. 1 enemy, and the feverish attempts of Soviet propaganda to make them believe so not only have been ineffectual but have even had a boomerang effect. As a result of being subjected to a constant barrage of anti-American propaganda of all kinds—attacks on the Truman doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and even U. S. economic aid programs directly benefiting Africa; attacks on American security arrangements and military bases overseas (with particular emphasis on U. S. bases in Africa); attacks on "bourgeois democracy" as exemplified by the United States; and others too numerous to mention—the informed leaders of African nationalism could not but sense that the motivation behind all this had nothing to do with Africa's welfare but was the purely selfish one of weakening the United States and Western unity for the greater glory and power of the Soviet bloc. The end result has been to stimulate African suspicion of Soviet sincerity and resentment at being used for the furtherance of Moscow's "cold war" objectives.

Among such African intellectuals as may have been aware of the real Soviet view of Africa as mirrored in Soviet African studies and in the casual treatment accorded to it in the Soviet press, the reaction just described must have been far stronger. Soviet scholarship in the African field was not only meager, African studies forming a relatively minute part of the output of the various academies and institutes for "oriental" studies,

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but also relatively uninformed.[9] Indeed, at least until 1953, Soviet scholars generally treated Africa as merely a subcontinent of Asia without any distinctive features of its own, and maintained that Stalin's "theory of colonial revolution" held good as a "guide to action" for all colonial areas.[10] As for the press, a content analysis of articles published on the general subject of colonialism reveals that Africa was not even mentioned in 50 percent of them, and in 40 percent of the remainder received only brief mention or superficial treatment.

Strategic Blunders

Strategic blunders have been even more important than the defects of Communist propaganda as a factor in alienating African nationalist sentiment. To a large extent, these were products of the Stalin era, but they left an imprint that has not been wholly erased. Besides Stalin's "black republic doctrine" mentioned earlier, another outstanding example was his policy of entrusting the direction and control of Communist movements in the African colonies to the Communist Parties in the respective ruling countries. This system of tutelage was, in part, inspired by the Communist ideological belief that it was necessary for the proletariat in the imperialist countries to form an alliance with the oppressed masses in the colonies.[11] Whatever its inspiration, however, the system appeared to Africans to be but an offensive carry-over of the imperialist system and the notion of European racial superiority.

Of far more serious consequence in the African context was the Communists' inflexible insistence, until 1949, that the struggle for national liberation of colonial peoples must be carried out solely under the leadership of the proletariat, and that the proletariat might ally itself with the peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie, but in no case with the national bourgeoisie, whose leaders were accused of being in the pay of the imperialists. To some extent, this doctrinal position was moderated by Soviet acceptance, in 1949, of the "neo-Maoist" strategy line. Instead of a three-class alliance, the new line called for a broader national front which would also embrace those elements of the national bourgeoisie opposed to imperialism. On the other hand, it still firmly maintained that the working class, under the CP's direction, must fill "the role of acknowledged leader in the colonial revolution."[12]

For a number of reasons, the neo-Maoist strategy was hardly any better suited to African conditions than what had preceded it. The proletariat as a distinct class was virtually non-existent except in South Africa; the African peasant, with the exception of the plantation worker, was politically inert and bound to tribal custom; and the urban middle class (petty bourgeoisie) was generally small in number, with part of it composed of persons of Asiatic race and therefore divorced from the rest of the population. Thus, the three chief components of the neo-Maoist national front were largely lacking in Africa, while it was in fact the intelligentsia—generally identified by the Communists with the national bourgeoisie—who formed the core of the African nationalist movements, and who supplied their leadership.

The question of leadership therefore remained a crucial issue under the neo-Maoist strategy, which conceded that elements of the national bourgeoisie could be admitted to the national front, but only under working-class (i.e., Communist) leadership. Thus, one Soviet expert on Africa, writing in early 1950, frankly acknowledged that "the leading role in the national liberation movements of the majority of colonies of tropical and south Africa now belongs to the national bourgeoisie and the national intelligentsia." He added, however, that the national bourgeoisie had its shortcomings in this role and that, for final victory, "the only force capable of arousing and directing the people . . . is the working class."[13] Other Soviet writers were much more explicit in indicating that Moscow had no intention of acquiescing in national bourgeois leadership of the African independence movements. "The working class and its vanguard, the Communist Parties," one article declared, ". . . are fighting for leadership of the movement and for the ousting of the national bourgeoisie."[14]

The New Approach

The year 1955, however, marked a new turning-point in Soviet Asian and African policy of much more far-reaching significance than the minor shift represented

[9] For examples of Soviet scholarship on Africa, see: *Imperialisticheskaia borba za Afriku i osvoboditelnoe dvizhenie narodov: sbornik statei* (The Imperialist Struggle for Africa and the Liberation Movement of the Peoples: A Collection of Articles), compiled by the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1953; and S. Datlin, *Afrika pod gnetom imperializma* (Africa under the Yoke of Imperialism), Moscow, 1951.

[10] I. Potekhin, "The Stalinist Theory of Colonial Revolution and the National Liberation Movement in Tropical and South Africa," *Sovetskaia Etnografiia,* No. 1, 1950, p. 29.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[12] E. Zhukov, "Problems of the National-Colonial Struggle Since World War II," *Voprosy Ekonomiki,* No. 9, 1949, p. 55.

[13] Potekhin, "The Stalinist Theory . . .", *op.cit.*, p. 35.

[14] V. Vasileva, "African Peoples in the Struggle for Peace and Freedom," *Voprosy Ekonomiki,* No. 1, 1952, p. 102.

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by the adoption of the neo-Maoist strategy. In the light of a critical assessment of its past miscalculations, the post-Stalin leadership began overhauling its whole strategy and propaganda approach to the newly-independent national regimes and nationalist-led liberation movements in Asia and Africa, with a view to making it more realistic and adaptable to the changed—and still rapidly changing—conditions in those areas.

The anti-imperialist propaganda line, of course, still remains, but it has been revamped so as to retain its applicability to countries which already have gained their independence or may do so in the future. This involves new emphasis on the theme that subjection to imperialist economic exploitation does not end with the mere attainment of political sovereignty:

A people cannot be free if their country's main economic resources are used to enrich, not themselves, but foreign monopolies. They cannot be free if their economy—distorted by years of imperialist rule—is so dominated by two or three foreign concerns that it is possible for those concerns, at any time, to bring irresistible pressure to bear upon their government.[15]

The new strategy, too, reveals important changes. It abandons the old formula that "those who are not for us are against us." It acknowledges that the struggle for independence need not be carried out under working-class leadership, but can in fact be led by the formerly denounced and distrusted national bourgeoisie. Thus, the leaders of independent African states—President Tubman of Liberia, Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and indeed Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia—and nationalist leaders such as Nramdi Azikiwe in Nigeria are no longer stigmatized by Moscow as "lackeys of imperialism" but treated as friends and collaborators. To be sure, the Communists still have their reservations with regard to the close Western connections of these leaders, but they have been careful not to let this emerge too blatantly in their propaganda—at least to the countries concerned. Indeed, they have at times even endorsed economic arrangements between the African nations and capitalist countries, though describing it as "essential that these ties not be based on the use of force and colonial plunder."[16]

The primary concern of the new strategy is clearly to achieve Communist identification with nationalism. This has meant cessation of the old harping on the class struggle and other Communist ideological dogmas, as evidenced by the fact that the Communist representatives at the Afro-Asian conference at Cairo in January 1958 studiously refrained from making any reference to the theme of socialist revolution. It has also resulted in moves toward releasing the Communist groups in the newly-independent states from tutelage and control by the British and French Communist Parties, and permitting them to have direct contacts with Moscow, although various obstacles have prevented abrupt termination of the old system.

Perhaps the most significant change of all is that Africa for the first time has been accorded a priority of its own in Moscow's overall international planning and activities. This has been reflected in increased activity in the field of specialized African studies.[17] It has also manifested itself in the area of diplomacy, first by Soviet action in 1955—followed subsequently by the rest of the Communist bloc—to establish official relations with Liberia, the Sudan, and Ghana, and since then by the dispatch of special Soviet delegations to these countries, invitations for reciprocal visits to the Soviet Union by African delegations, and—not least—by Soviet and satellite offers of trade pacts, technical assistance, and economic and financial aid to Liberia, Ethiopia, Guinea, the Sudan and Ghana. Soviet arms shipments to Guinea are a *prima facie* indication that Moscow is also prepared to proffer that form of assistance to the African national regimes, as it has done already to Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries.

The Prospects Ahead

Yet, even with this new orientation of Soviet strategy in Africa, there are as yet no evidences of any marked growth of the indigenous Communist movements that would suggest a more effective identification of communism with the goals and aspirations of African nationalism. The results to date cannot, of course, be regarded as conclusive inasmuch as four years is too short a time to test the effectiveness of a strategy obviously designed for the long term and which first had to overcome the resistance engendered by many years of propaganda ineptitude and strategic blunders. Nevertheless, these results—or rather, lack of results—provide at least a tentative indication that the new African élite are by no means being swept off their feet by the blandishments of Moscow's new approach,

[15] Derek Kartum, *Africa, Africa! A Continent Rises to its Feet,* New York, 1954, p. 59.

[16] K. Ivanov, "International Relations and the Collapse of Colonialism," *International Affairs,* No. 5, 1957, p. 17.

[17] See *Sovetskaia Etnografiia,* No. 3, 1957, pp. 184-6; Christopher Bird, "Soviet Scholars Embark on Major Program of African Research," *Africa Special Report,* Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 12-14; Mary Holdsworth, "African Studies in the USSR—2," *West Africa,* February 15, 1958, p. 151; and *Soviet Survey,* April-June 1959, pp. 37-45.

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that they are maintaining a cautious reserve and are determined to protect their hard-won political power and independence against any group which they suspect may be seeking to undermine them.

Perhaps a vital determinant of the outcome will be whether or not the parliamentary system (of the West European type) which the new African states have initially adopted proves capable of accommodating the desires and needs of their political leaders. Tendencies are undoubtedly present which could jeopardize healthy democratic development and indirectly encourage communism. The new national leaderships feel a strong need and compulsion to consolidate their political position, to infuse some discipline into the amorphous nationalist movements that brought them to power, and to carry out their ambitions of social revolution and speedy economic development. These inner pressures have created tendencies toward monopolization of power and restriction of political opposition.

In the light of these tendencies, three possible courses of future development can be discerned. First, as its revolutionary program encounters inevitable opposition, the national leadership might be driven to resort to intensified totalitarian methods, meaning the end of parliamentary government. Second, the leadership might choose to yield to opposition pressures from outside and within its own party or movement, producing a drift into an unstable pattern of government by coalition and compromise between political cliques, such as developed in some south Asian countries. Third, even where the governing élite—e.g., as in the case of the Indian Congress Party—might enjoy sufficient prestige to be able, without a resort to authoritarianism, to maintain its leadership position over a long period of time, the role of the opposition, though legal and recognized, would tend to become tenuous because of its slight immediate prospects of sharing the fruits of power.

It can be seen that, in any of these three eventualities, the Communists might be better off than any other opposition group. In the first—that of an authoritarian regime—their tradition and experience in underground activity and their enjoyment of outside support would give them greater chances of political survival. In the second—that of government by shifting coalitions of political cliques—the frustrations and popular dissatisfaction which such a system creates would play directly into the hands of the Communists, particularly where the political tolerance of the system permitted them to operate as a legal political party. Finally, in the third eventuality—that of a limited opposition—the stronger organization and discipline of the Communists would make them more capable of remaining effective as an opposition over a protracted period of waiting until the ruling party's grip weakened enough to permit an opposition bid for power. It should be added that in Africa the Communists do not face the handicap of having to contend with intervention by the professional army since none has as yet been built up by the new African states. The strongest alternative power center is the civil service, and it lacks a mass base.

On the other hand, Moscow's new strategy itself involves certain inherent handicaps for the African Communist movements. The Soviet policy of supporting and playing up to the African national regimes and nationalist movements necessarily implies acceptance, insofar as the African Communists are concerned, of peaceful competition and persuasion as the means of achieving power. This, of course, hampers their tactical freedom of action and obliges them to rely on winning mass support, something that is inherently difficult for a strongly doctrinaire party.

Furthermore, the fact that the new strategy has not deterred the nationalist regimes in the United Arab Republic and Iraq, as well as in some of the new African states, from taking strong action against the local Communist movements may be causing Moscow to re-evaluate the whole pro-nationalist approach, with the possibility of a return to greater reliance on an independent and aggressive role for the local parties. Should there be an end to the Communist flirtation with nationalism, infiltration and subversion probably would become once more the backbone of Communist strategy in Africa.

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The Communist Course in Finland

By Immanuel Birnbaum

MANY, PERHAPS MOST, of the Communist delegates who came to Moscow from Europe's democratic countries early this year to attend the 21st Party Congress, were messengers of bad news. Setbacks, defections, or at best stagnation, was what they had to report, and the usual wishful cant about future victories did little to brighten the disheartening picture. But there were a few exceptions, among them the reports of the delegates from Finland. While elsewhere in Northern Europe—in Sweden, Norway, and lately even in Iceland—Communist organizations have steadily been losing influence, Finland remains the one counrty where the Communist Party is strong, where fellow-travelling organizations are widely developed, and where electoral votes cast for the Communists and their allies are on the increase.

The strength of communism in Finland has little to do with the geopolitical position of this small, sparsely populated neighbor of the Soviet Union. It should be remembered that during World War II—in 1940 and again in 1944—Finland was twice defeated by the superior might of the Soviet Army and forced to accept onerous peace treaties. The territorial losses suffered by the Finns—including West Karelia with its important city of Viborg, and in the arctic North the Petsamo area with its valuable nickel mines—as well as other painful terms, certainly did little to make the population receptive to Moscow's wooing. On the other hand, the Finnish CP has not had to bear the full brunt of popular feeling over the treaty exactions, since all political parties have committed themselves in principle to abide by the peace terms—even though the Communists occasionally interpret this "policy of fulfilment" in terms that are somewhat broader and favor the Soviet point of view. Still, the Communist Party would be hard put to find any issues in the realm of foreign policy that would enhance its appeal.

The recent strong showing of the Communist Party is rather due to indigenous factors involving both adverse social conditions in some parts of the country and divisive conflicts within and between the parties in competition with the Communists. The possible effects of this development need not be exaggerated but they cannot be overlooked. In assessing them it is necessary to consider briefly the evolution of the party from its inception.

Two Approaches to Revolution

During the time when Finland—through the person of the Tsar—was united with the Russian Empire (1909-17), the relatively liberal Finnish political order led many Russian revolutionaries to seek refuge in the country. Here they continued their agitational activities and established connections with local radicals. When the October Revolution broke out, its tides cut deep into Finnish political life and churned up a state of civil war that was to last for two years. While Finland's nationalist elements sought to exploit the upheavals in Russia to achieve complete independence from Petersburg, some leftist radicals saw in their country a suitable springboard for spreading the revolution westward. Supported and directed from Petersburg by Zinoviev, then chief of the Communist International, these romantic revolutionaries tried to seize power by force of arms, expecting all along an early accession of the entire north of Scandinavia. With the failure of these efforts and the reestablishment of order, the party was forced back underground where it remained until 1944, when the Russo-Finnish peace treaty brought it out into public life.

The early years of the movement were marked by a see-sawing struggle between two factions. One was

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headed by the fiery professional revolutionary, Kullervo Manner, and his wife, Hanna Malm, who represented the radical element in the party and continued to agitate for putchist tactics. With some backing among the functionaries of the Finnish labor movement, Manner managed intermittently to gain the reins of control over the party. But when the ultimate bankruptcy of their political endeavor became clear, Manner and Malm withdrew permanently behind the Russian border to live as political emigrés in Moscow. Years later they vanished in the vortex of Stalin's Great Purges, along with other Communist refugees from the West.

Manner's antagonist in the Finnish Communist movement was the Helsinki-born writer Otto W. Kuusinen, who in his native country was no more successful than Manner, but who, thanks to his greater political flexibility, has been personally more fortunate. Kuusinen was an adherent of the undercover struggle; he advocated Communist infiltration of Socialist and trade union organizations and collaboration with other left-wing groups, very much along the lines of what later became known as Popular Front tactics. In the course of the early power struggle Manner at one time had Kuusinen expelled from the Finnish Communist Party and denounced him to Zinoviev as a traitor.[1] With Lenin's assistance however, Kuusinen was reinstated in the party, and once again replaced Manner as head of the movement. But soon Kuusinen was diverted from the mainstream of Finnish affairs by his appointment to important assignments in the Soviet party and the Comintern. Once more Manner was able to gain the upper hand in the Finnish organization, but his term was short-lived. Since his final exit, Kuusinen's authority in the Communist Party has remained unchallenged.

This authority, and the great prominence that Kuusinen currently enjoys in the high command of international communism, had its beginnings in his early attachment to the Kremlin. He was intelligent enough to stand close to Stalin, and, during the most trying times of the despot's dictatorship, to remove himself from public view to remote Petrozavodsk, the capital city of Soviet Karelia. As Premier of the Karelian Autonomous Socialist Republic he supervised Communist activity in neighboring Finland. After the outbreak of the Russo-Finnish war in 1939, he appeared briefly as the head of the Communist "Finnish Government" which Stalin organized in support of his military campaign but disbanded after the conclusion of the peace treaty.

Little was heard of Kuusinen in the years that followed. He remained consultant to the foreign affairs bureau of the Soviet party and member of the Central Committee, but spent most of his time in semi-retirement, delving into the literary history of old Finnish folk poetry. It was not until after Stalin's death that he was promoted to the highest Soviet party organ, the Presidium. In more recent years Khrushchev has made use of him in some of the difficult negotiations with foreign Communists, Tito in particular. Should the aging Marshal Voroshilov retire from public life in the near future, Kuusinen, now 77, will become the senior member of the Moscow party leadership.

The Hertta Kuusinen Line

It has been a long time since Otto Kuusinen relinquished the leadership of the Finnish Communist Party to his younger successors. Among them by far the most intelligent is his daughter Hertta Kuusinen, member of the Politbureau and chairman of the Communist-led group of the Finnish Parliament. In the shadow of this battle-trained woman the other noticeable functionaries of the party, such as the Secretaries Aaltonen and V. Pessi, appear as mere *apparatchiki.*

During the inter-war period, when the Communist Party was outlawed in Finland, Hertta Kuusinen spent a total of almost eight years in jail for illegal political activity, retreating in the end for a protracted stay in Moscow as a political exile. Since her return to Finland in 1944 and assumption of Communist leadership in Parliament, she has struck a political line which by and large follows the tradition of her father's. Cooperation with other left-radical forces, incorporation of the Communist Party into a broader "people's democratic" front, adjustment to the requirements of legality, and the goal of Communist participation in a coalition government, are the essential features of this political conception.

The Finnish Communists have of course already had some experience in coalition government. Between 1944 and 1948 they joined several cabinets in which more

[1] A former friend and collaborator of Kuusinen's, Arvo (Poika) Tuominen, now a Social Democrat, claims in his memoirs (published in Finnish and Swedish under the titles *The Course of the Hammer and Sickle, Chimes of the Kremlin,* and *Secret Conspiracy,* Söderström, Helsinki, 1957-59) that Zinoviev had even planned to have Kuusinen murdered. The Russian chief of the Comintern is said to have sent agents for this purpose to Sweden where the prospective victim had fled before the Finnish police. Kuusinen, so the story goes, escaped death only because at the crucial moment Zinoviev's inebriated chief agent betrayed his instructions. Tuominen relates the behind-the-scenes disputes of those days in wildly romantic colors, and many of his statements, cast for dramatic effect, require critical examination. But he does reproduce credibly enough the atmosphere permeating the illegal Finnish Communist movement between 1917 and 1927.

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often than not they controlled the all-important Ministry of Interior. But for reasons that are not yet quite clear, they never made a serious attempt to exploit this power position to reshape the Finnish constitution along "people's democratic" patterns. Arvo Tuominen (see footnote 1) maintains that the Communist Minister of Interior and then husband of Hertta Kuusinen, Yrjö Leino, had indeed been planning a *coup d'état* in the Prague style, but that in the last moment he decided not to carry the plan through. Other well-informed participants in the political events of the post-war years hold that the decision not to press an experiment in "people's democracy" originated in Moscow rather than with Leino (who, incidentally, had since been divorced by his wife and expelled from the Communist Party). In any event, it is certain that there were Communist functionaries in Finland who saw more important advantages in less risky tactics.

Division in the Socialist Camp

The Communists' restraint during the late 1940's can perhaps be explained, in part at least, by their intention to exploit within the parliamentary framework the growing weakness of one of the main traditional pillars of Finnish democracy—the Social Democratic Party. This party has been plagued by dissension and schismatic movements ever since the second Russo-Finnish War (1941-44), and time has so far failed to heal the breach.

The strong man of the Social Democratic organization, Väiniö Tanner, a steadfast opponent of communism and a brilliant organizer who had risen from the cooperative movement, had concentrated his energies during the years between the two wars on defending the legal labor union movement against Communist infiltration efforts. In this he became the most successful antagonist to Kuusinen's policy in Finland. All along, however, Tanner maintained the attitude that in spite of the need of internal defense against communism there prevailed the equally urgent necessity to safeguard a tolerable relationship between little Finland and its big Soviet neighbor. No less a person than President Paasikivi, the statesman who three times—in 1920, in 1941, and then again in 1944—concluded peace treaties with the Soviet Union, confirms in his memoirs that Tanner as Foreign Minister during the critical months of 1939-40 belonged to those who preached a prompt understanding with Moscow.[2] During the second Russo-Finnish war, in which the Finns joined Hitler to restore their old frontiers, Tanner held no significant government posts; however, his party supported the war effort and from the course of subsequent events it might be presumed that he gave at least tacit approval to this position. It was this issue which eventually led to the schism in the party.

The split was initiated by six Social Democratic members of Parliament who refused to back the war policy and demanded a speedy conclusion of peace. This group, under the leadership of Mauno Pekkala, became the nucleus of a new left-Socialist party which was named the Socialist Unity Party. With the end of hostilities Pekkala became Premier in the first post-war cabinet, and his following entered into a loose working relationship with the Communists. Most of these left-wing Socialist politicians were intellectuals from the upper strata of the state bureaucracy and the professions, and none of them believed in any of the fundamental principles of communism; other than the issue of war policy there was very little that separated them from the Social Democrats. The latter, however, embittered by the split caused in the party ranks by their former colleagues, pursued the old fight about war-time foreign policy issues even after the conclusion of the peace treaty.

The dispute became especially acrimonious when, accused of war crimes for his approval of the alliance with Hitler, Väiniö Tanner was brought to trial and sentenced in 1946 to five and a half years of imprisonment (two of which he served before release was granted). As he had, in internal politics, always steadfastly opposed Nazism—for example, he saved a number of Jewish refugees from extradition to Hitlerite Germany—he became a martyr in the eyes of his followers, while those who had contributed to the imprisonment of their leader were viewed as Judases. This attitude then drove the left-Socialist group even closer to the Communist side.

Communist Maneuvers

The left-wing Socialists showed little organizing talent; they managed to form only a very few local groups, and even these soon withered away. The Communists, were quick to see the possibilities for exploiting this situation and with better-trained organizers as well as more plentiful financial resources they were able to do so. The upshot was the formation of the "Finnish People's Democratic League" in which the Communists and the left-wing Socialists joined forces. The distribution of posts in the new organization and its sub-

[2] *J. K. Paasikivis Minnen, 1939-40* (J. K. Paasikivi's Memoirs, 1939-40), Söderström, Helsinki, 1959, especially chapters 5 and 6.

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groups followed a predictable pattern: some of the more prominent Socialists received a number of representative posts, but the Communists installed themselves in all key positions. This Communist-Socialist alliance of course caused considerable damage to the Social Democrats.

Most of the left-wing Socialists, needless to say, soon tired of the game. A few allowed themselves to be transferred to posts abroad where they could avoid party politics; others rejoined the ranks of the Social Democrats; and death took another few. At present only two of the formerly prominent Social Democrats still remain in the People's Democratic League: Eino Kilpi, the former editor-in-chief of the Helsinki Social Democratic paper, who became Deputy Chairman of the League's parliamentary group, and his wife, who is herself a member of Parliament. Both of them have become entirely dependent on the Communists, even though on minor issues they occasionally assume independent positions. The People's Democratic League has become, in effect, an auxiliary organization of the Finnish Communist Party.

Against this background the advent of the East European thaw could have offered the Social Democratic Party an excellent opportunity to reunite the forces of Finnish democratic socialism under its own leadership. The backwash of the upheavals that shook the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe in the wake of the 20th Congress reached deep into the ranks of the Finnish radical Left and produced a number of serious defections. Perhaps the most prominent defector among fellow-travelling elements was the former chairman of the left-wing Socialists, Atos Wirtanen, who announced the end of any further cooperation on his part with the Communists, and withdrew from politics. Several Communist intellectuals, among them the editor-in-chief of Helsinki's People's Democratic paper, Raoul Palmgren, soon followed his example.

But curiously enough the right-wing Socialists failed to take advantage of the disaffection in the left-Socialist camp, by trying to draw the disgruntled former Communist fellow-travellers back into their ranks. This they could have done by revitalizing their foreign policy conceptions and allowing greater flexibility in the question of Soviet-Finnish relations—the very issue which had been the original cause of the split in the party. But their views had petrified to such an extent that they were no longer able to reconcile the anti-Communist policies of their domestic program with at least the degree of cooperation with Moscow in the field of foreign relations prescribed in the peace treaty and later Russo-Finnish agreements. The attitude of the Social Democrats had grown increasingly rigid since 1948 when the embittered Tanner was released from political incarceration and resumed the leadership of his party. Thereafter the Social Democratic organizations fell into the hands of young politicians of his following, who on some questions of foreign and economic policy have stood to the right of the moderate Finnish bourgeois elements as well as the non-socialist Agrarians.

This development has caused serious divisions among all the forces in Finland's democratic camp. Despite the efforts of the more skillful Social Democratic leaders, particularly the clever and moderate Speaker of the Parliament and former Prime Minister, Karl August Fagerholm, to bring about a measure of cooperation among the country's democratic parties, the hostility between the two bulwarks of Finnish democracy—the Social Democrats and the Agrarian Party—has continued to grow. As a further consequence of its policies, the Social Democratic Party was confronted in 1958 by a new revolt in its ranks, leading to the formation, in May of this year, of a new left-Socialist party, the Workers' and Small Farmers' Social Democratic League. Its leader is Aare Simonen, the ambitious former Minister of Interior, and once the man most hated by the Communists. Since his break with Tanner, however, they have eagerly welcomed him as a new ally.

Precarious Political Balance

The beneficiaries of these political conflicts have again been the Communists. In last year's elections they won a moderate number of new votes (about 17,000 in the whole country), but a proportionately larger number of parliamentary seats. A considerable number of Social Democratic voters, angered by the dissension in their own party, stayed at home on election day. But the Communists gained not only at the expense of the Social Democrats. The Agrarian Party which currently controls the constitutionally important presidency in the person of Urho Kekkonen, as well as a majority in the cabinet, also lost votes and seats to the Communist Party, particularly in the poor north. Many of the impoverished cottagers of Finnish Lapland, who till their plots of land in the summer and labor as forestry workers in winter, have felt disappointed of late by Agrarian neglect of their sore social problems. The government price support program for milk and other farm products —which is the pride of the Agrarian Party—brings only little benefit to the small northern peasants whose agricultural production is generally earmarked for their own consumption and only in insignificant amounts for the market.

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As a result of the 1958 election the People's Democratic League (*i.e.,* Communists and fellow-travellers) has thus become the strongest political group in Helsinki's single-chamber Parliament.[3] The 50 (out of a total of 200) votes controlled by the Communists can still be dispensed with in forming a coalition government, but only on condition that a workable majority of the other parties can be organized. And this—because of the growing animosity between the right-wing and the left-wing Socialists, and the right-wing Socialists and the Agrarians—has become so difficult that at present Finland is governed by a minority cabinet which is supported only by the confidence of the President of the Republic. The government, however, is running into increasing difficulties in securing parliamentary approval of its budgets and other legislative bills.

The Communists, under the leadership of Hertta Kuusinen, exploit this precarious parliamentary situation skillfully and purposefully. By throwing their weight this way or that they can influence legislative policy on a wide range of issues. In the field of foreign relations—aside from occasional minor criticism—the party generally supports the President and the Foreign Minister, whose policy is based on friendly accord with the Soviet Union. On most questions of social policy the Communists attempt to form majorities with the left-wing and the right-wing Socialists against the bourgeois parties and the Agrarians. On other occasions, they have let it be known that they would not consider cooperation with the left-wing Socialists and the Agrarian Party against the Social Democrats and the bourgeois parties with disfavor.

The latter combination could indeed muster the support of a parliamentary majority. This fact, coupled with the well-known desire of the Agrarians for cooperation with the Soviet Union,[4] has raised the specter of a Finnish Popular Front government in the minds of a number of political observers.

Are such fears really warranted? In the present writer's view the answer is no, for the time being at least, and for a number of cogent reasons. First, the experienced Agrarian politicians know full well that a parliamentary alliance with the extreme left would seriously damage their party in the next elections. The relatively prosperous peasants of central and southern Finland, who make up the core of the party's electorate, would desert the Agrarians in droves if they came to believe that they were being misused as the props of a pro-Communist or half-Communist government. That the party is aware of this danger was shown on the eve of the last elections when one of the more influential Agrarian leaders, the former Foreign Minister Virolainen, expressly promised in one of the country's largest dailies that no such coalition would take place.

A second reason why the formation of a Popular Front government is unlikely involves the interests of the Finnish Communist Party itself. It would hardly serve the party's longer-run political goals if it now assumed, for the first time since 1948, coresponsibility for government policy without being able to improve in any significant degree the economic lot of its followers. The Communist leadership seems to have different plans. Its first aim is to consolidate the party's recent success at the polls, in preparation for the next electoral test. Toward this end, it is vigorously campaigning for fellow-travelling supporters and party recruits among the Social Democrats who last year abstained from voting or who actually voted for the Communists. It has been claimed that the party has already succeeded in enrolling 13,000 new members this year; if this is true, the Communists can rightly point to a significant strengthening of their cadres.

The Kremlin's Viewpoint

There is still another and a more powerful reason that speaks against any early Communist attempt to join the Finnish government. It is Moscow's policy to allay all anti-Soviet feelings in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, and to strengthen the Scandinavian propensities for a policy of neutrality or at least a limitation of armaments. This approach to Scandinavia is not new in Russian diplomacy; in past centuries it was known in Russian diplomatic usage as "concern for peace in the North."

Certainly Moscow has long been aware that a disengagement of Norway and Denmark from NATO is not possible; but even a limitation of the active defense roles assigned to these two countries would be welcomed by the Soviet military policy makers. By the same token the Russians are worried over the current talk in Sweden of equipping the Swedish defense forces with atomic weapons. They need not expect, of course, that this neutral country would establish a stockpile of offensive

[3]The distribution of seats in the Finnish Parliament immediately following the July 6-7, 1958, general elections was as follows: Finnish People's Democratic League (the CP bloc), 50; Left Socialists, 3; Social Democrats, 48; Agrarians, 48; Liberals, 8; Swedish People's Party, 14; Conservatives, 29. Since then, however, 10 former Social Democrats have passed over to the left-wing Socialists under Simonen, raising the number of that group to 13 and decreasing the Social Democratic group to 38. —*Ed.*

[4]The Agrarian Minister Karjalainen has been careful to stress, however, that the cooperation is to be limited to Finland's observance of strict neutrality in all disputes between the Great Powers.

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weapons with atomic warheads, but even purely defensive medium-range missiles which could be launched from Swedish bases are viewed with much dismay by the commanders of the Soviet Union's Baltic military districts. There are, however, powerful forces in the Swedish governmental party who favor putting off the decision on atomic weapons until some outcome is reached in the current international negotiations on limitation of armaments.

The pacifist tendencies in Scandinavia can be encouraged only by persuading these countries that Khrushchev's references to "the Baltic as the sea of peace" are more than mere propaganda. Conversely, nothing would more quickly disturb Scandinavian sentiment favoring a limitation of armaments than fear induced by new Soviet expansion efforts in Finland. An attempt to bring the Communists back into the Helsinki government would seriously alarm all of Northern Europe: it would free Norway and Denmark from reservations over their participation in NATO; it would also set Sweden on a course of intensified armament and, indeed, might even induce the Swedes to consider the possibility of cooperation with the West in case of war.

Such a sudden change in the political atmosphere of Northern Europe, with the inevitable reverberations in other countries, could hardly seem desirable to Khrushchev. Any advantage gained by Moscow from Communist participation in the Finnish government would be negligible by comparison. Soviet diplomacy has done its utmost during the past years to create the impression in Stockholm, Oslo and Copenhagen that Finland is completely free to strengthen its relations with Scandinavia and that there is nothing the USSR would do to hinder the development of Finnish democracy along traditional Nordic lines. The government in Helsinki was thus allowed to join the Nordic Council, to take part in the negotiations for a Nordic customs union (negotiations, incidentally, which are proceeding extremely slowly), and even to express willingness to join a free-trade zone headed by Great Britain and Sweden.[5] The whole effect of this demonstrative respect for Finnish neutrality would vanish if the Communists in Helsinki started converting Finland into a people's democracy. It is reasonable to expect, therefore, that within the foreseeable future Khrushchev will not advise Hertta Kuusinen to force her way into the Finnish Government, and that indeed, should it become necessary, he would rather restrain her from any such undertaking. A Finland that is neutral, dependent on friendly relations with Moscow, yet recognized as a democratic republic in the West, is in the present international situation much more useful to Soviet foreign policy than a Finnish people's democracy.

[5] Since the writing of this article Finnish hopes to join the free-trade zone have been threatened by the clear Soviet objection expressed in a *Pravda* article of last July 19th, which warned Finland to stay out of the proposed Outer Seven arrangement lest its neutrality be endangered.—*Ed.*

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Diplomacy and Ideology in the Arab World

The Soviet Union and the Middle East,
by Walter Z. Laqueur.
F. A. Praeger, New York, 1959.

Reviewed by Elie Kedourie

MR. LAQUEUR'S BOOK raises a number of interesting questions concerning the role of ideology in Soviet diplomacy, the interrelation between nationalism and communism in the Middle East, and the future prospects for the Soviet Union and the Western powers in this area.

In the first part of the book, entitled "The Soviet Image of the Middle East," the author discusses in detail the writings of Soviet leaders and experts on the Middle East, from the time of the Bolshevik revolution until today. For virtually all of this period up to 1955, whether by design or through force of circumstances, the Soviet Union was not active in the Middle East, and its influence there was negligible. The one notable exception was the Soviet occupation of northern Iran during World War II and the subsequent abortive attempt to establish in that part of the country Communist-controlled Azerbaijani and Kurdish regimes —a venture, however, that was quickly abandoned and never again followed up. This lack of first-hand Soviet experience has left its imprint on the literature discussed by Mr. Laqueur; the Soviet writings strike one as little more than academic exercises in fitting Middle Eastern political events into Marxist-Leninist conceptual categories.

According to the Communist view, nationalist movements are an expression of the bourgeois-capitalist phase of world history. In colonial and semi-colonial countries nationalist movements embody the struggle of a nascent native bourgeoisie against imperialist rule —imperialism being defined as economic exploitation of underdeveloped areas by mature, highly industrialized capitalist countries. An analysis of Middle Eastern politics based on such concepts is bound to be unreal and misleading, and the picture that emerges from Mr. Laqueur's interesting account of Soviet disquisitions on such topics as Kemalism, Reza Shah, Palestine, or the Wafd is curious indeed. There is of course the everpresent dialectical presentation of conflicting social phenomena familiar from all standard Communist writing: national-revolutionary *versus* national-reformist movements; progressive *versus* reactionary forces; the bourgeoisie *versus* the masses. However, when the attempt is made to fit various specific personalities, social groups, and movements into these formal categories, the results are often strangely incongruous. Soviet writers have thus spent much time and ink debating whether Reza Shah, Atatürk, or King Amanullah were progressive persons; whether the Arab revolts in Palestine were anti-feudal risings, or, on the contrary, feudal reactionary manifestations; whether the Wafd was a reactionary bourgeois movement, or whether it was advancing the interests of the Egyptian masses. But of the actual social structure of these countries, of the cleavage between the official classes and the citizenry, between town and country, or between the dominant religion and the protected minorities, not a word. Nor has there been anything said about the intellectual crisis in modern Islam, the alienation that westernization has produced among the educated classes, or why so many political movements in the Middle East have been led by military officers. All these basic features are absent from the Soviet picture of the Middle East, partly, no doubt, because of lack of Soviet knowledge based on direct experience in the area, but also because they cannot be always readily reduced to the conventional Marxist categories which are obligatory in Soviet political analysis.

MOSCOW'S RELATIONS with the Middle Eastern states and Soviet diplomatic action in the area are examined in the second part of Mr. Laqueur's book. From the account of the events the reader soon learns that in the last decade or so Soviet diplomacy has shown little concern for the careful dialectics of its political theorists. Thus in spite of the long-standing Bolshevik

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hostility to Zionism, the Soviet government supported the creation of Israel. Again, despite their poor opinion of the Egyptian *coup d'état* of 1952, the Russians showed themselves quite ready to exploit the inter-Arab rivalries exacerbated by Nasser's ambition for Arab leadership, by concluding an arms' deal with the Egyptian leader. There is no question that it is possible to justify these tactics on doctrinal grounds: it can be said, for example, that at the present stage of development the national bourgeoisie, which Nasser personifies, is in the van of historical progress, and that as such it represents one step forward on the road to a proletarian revolution and a classless society; but the strong impression persists nonetheless that such arguments are no more than *ex post facto* justifications and have little connection with the mainsprings of Soviet action in the Middle East.

IT IS THUS difficult to avoid the conclusion that the real factor catapulting Moscow into Middle Eastern politics has been its sharp eye for beckoning opportunity, rather than its reliance on Marxian dialectics. Similarly, there is little doubt that the Kremlin's measure of success in the Middle East is not due so much to the penetrating insights of sharp Marxist theoreticians as to the simple fact that the Soviet Union is a Great Power, and that being unburdened by previous commitments in the Middle East, it can reap the advantage of divided counsels and uncertain purposes among its Western rivals. The Axis Powers enjoyed similar advantages in their brief foray into Middle Eastern politics in the 1930's. But once they are actively involved in the area, the Soviets too will be caught up in commitments and embarrassments, and we may then perhaps see a modern version, with different players, of the Great Game which Tsarist Russia and the British Empire played in Central Asia and the Middle East during the last century.

Mr. Laqueur's own viewpoint is rather different. He believes that the Soviet leaders are acting on the assumption that a Communist revolution is inevitable in the Middle East, that Soviet support for "radical Arab nationalism" is like the process of fattening up calves for the slaughter; that it is implicit in the problems of the Middle East that sooner or later the Communists will be able to seize power there. This, according to the author, is why, in spite of the anti-Soviet character of "radical Arab nationalism" and Nasser's attacks on the Soviets, they continue to support the Egyptian President, presumably calculating that if he is given enough rope he will end up by hanging himself.

But how realistic is this Soviet assumption? It cannot be denied, of course, that the Middle East is in turmoil, and that this unrest provides opportunities for a Great Power which wishes to establish its position there. If this is the case, all that is necessary to assume is that the Arab East will continue to be in turmoil, and that the Arab states will continue to be ruled by military men who will seek the support of one Great Power or another to promote their regional ambitions, or to protect themselves from the ambitions of their neighbors. Sensible diplomacy can assume no more than that; the rest must be left to skill, luck and pertinacity. At this time it is the Soviet Union that stands to profit most from this situation.

It may be asked, moreover, whether a Communist revolution in the Middle East would necessarily be to the advantage of the Soviet Union. This would be so only if such a revolution could unify the whole Middle East into one Communist state that would be subservient to or allied with the USSR. Under the present circumstances, however, this possibility is very remote, even though Communist revolutions in one or more of the Mid-Eastern states are conceivable. And if a multiplicity of states—even if some were Communist—continued to be the dominant political pattern in the area, regional rivalries would persist, and these in turn would ensure that some of the states would be the clients of one Great Power, while others would turn for support to another. If, furthermore, the Middle Eastern Communists cannot take over the whole of the area simultaneously, they would have to be helped militarily by the Soviet Union. Would not the Western Powers consider this a *casus belli,* and would not the whole issue then become one of global significance?

IT OUGHT TO BE ADDED that to talk of "revolutions" in the Middle East is also misleading. Revolutions, so far, have not happened in the Middle East—revolutions, that is, in the sense of popular spontaneous uprisings such as the French or the Russian revolutions. The commotions which have taken place in recent years have been for the most part military *coups d'état*—a phenomenon hardly surprising in a society that has neither constitutional traditions, nor independent foci of influence, nor powerful organized private interests, whether capitalist or proletarian, and where the military are the only organized force. This situation, indeed, is likely to endure for some time to come, and any revolution in the Middle East, in the foreseeable future, is therefore likely to be the work of conspiratorial officers. How probable is it that these

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officers will be trained Communist cadres, ready to take in hand and guide the proletarian revolution according to Leninist precepts?

If so many of these questions occur to an outsider, they are also bound to occur to Soviet policy makers. And as they have important interests to protect, are they likely to put them in jeopardy by basing the policies of the Soviet Union on foundations which seem so hazardous? Are they not more likely to exploit each opportunity as it arises, rather than work according to a plan? If they were to succeed, they would not be at a loss for ideological rationalizations.

The CP and the American Labor Movement

The Communist Party Versus the CIO,
by Max M. Kampelman.
F. A. Praeger, New York, 1957.

Communism In American Unions,
by David J. Saposs.
McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1959.

Reviewed by Ben B. Seligman

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT in the United States is often said to be possessed by a hard-headed pragmatism which offers little room for anything beyond an interest in job conditions, wages and the immediate concern with matters of collective bargaining. This of course, is its basic outlook, a unique approach to labor management relations which was hammered out of a rough block of decades of difficult experience. This does not mean that American labor unions lack expressions of idealism; witness, for example, their many efforts to improve social legislation and their participation in numerous projects international in character. Yet fundamentally, American unions have remained "bread-and-butter" organizations, concerned with job rights, security and a fair share in the fruits of capitalism.

Nevertheless, efforts have occasionally been made to direct trade union activity into more explicitly political channels. Some of these efforts sprang from a native radicalism, deeply imbued with a millenarian spirit. More often, however, they were instituted by outside groups whose main objective was to convert the unions into political institutions, utterly at odds with the traditional American conception of trade unionism.

The most dramatic—and most destructive—attempt along these lines was that undertaken by the Communists. From its very inception in the early 1920's the Communist Party made the trade unions a legitimate object of political control. It was Lenin himself who instructed his comrades to ". . . resort to all sorts of stratagems, artifices, illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges, only so as to get into the trade unions, to remain in them and to carry on Communist work within them at all costs." The baneful consequences of this directive are ably recorded by Max Kampelman and David Saposs in the books under review. Mr. Kampelman, a Washington attorney and long time legislative consultant to Senator Hubert Humphrey, concentrates on the Communist effort in the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Mr. Saposs, whose life-long study of left-wing movements is well known, depicts the Communist attack on both the AFL and CIO. There is consequently a large measure of overlapping, with Mr. Saposs in fact drawing a good deal of his material from the Kampelman book. The compliment is certainly deserving, for the latter is indeed an accomplished, scholarly piece of documentation, showing what the Communist objectives were in seeking to grasp power in the CIO unions, how they exercised that power in the interests of Soviet foreign policy and finally how their opponents became sufficiently irate to drive them out of office and out of the labor movement.

The Saposs volume focuses mainly on the Communist attempt to seize control of the motion picture unions in Hollywood and the New York Hotel and Restaurant

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Workers. Consequently, neither book offers a complete picture of communism in American unions. The fact of the matter is that the Communist Party began to woo the American worker virtually from its creation after World War I, when William Z. Foster's Trade Union Educational League sought to infiltrate the AFL. Quickly branded as a "dual" (or parallel) union—a heinous crime in the trade union lexicon—the Communists could achieve at best only local, fleeting successes. Nominally bent on arousing the "political consciousness" of the workers, the Communists in effect tried to turn every demand for higher wages into a defense of the Soviet Union.

A CLASSIC CASE was the textile mill strike in Passaic, New Jersey. Here was an industry that had resisted unionization and long imposed the most depressing conditions on its workers. The Communists sensed an opportunity to display their techniques of direct action: when a severe wage reduction was instituted in October 1926, culminating in a strike, the party dispatched its organizers, established a United Front Committee and set to work to lead some 15,000 employees on the picket line. The strike was one of the severest in American industrial history, and was made even harsher by virtue of Communist incapacity. About the only thing that was done with any effectiveness was the organization of a publicity campaign to help raise funds for party functionaries attached to the strike committee. Decisions affecting the conduct of the strike were all made at CP headquarters, without consulting the strike committee itself. The party demonstrated, as it would over and over again, that its political aims took precedence over the economic objectives of the worker. After months of fruitless struggle, the strike was lost, setting back unionism in textiles for years to come.

Undaunted by this catastrophe, the Communists essayed another adventure in New Bedford only two years later. The same group of party functionaries who had engineered the Passaic fiasco appeared in the Massachusetts mill town to organize mass meetings and giant demonstrations and to distribute copies of the *Daily Worker*. Again, the Communist attempt to turn the strike into a political campaign alienated public sympathy from the workers. The New Bedford police were as violent in their reaction as were the Passaic authorities. Within half a year this strike, too, was lost.

While in these instances no long-established bona fide unions were affected, the same did not hold true in the case of the New York garment trades where Communist behavior virtually shattered the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. Here Foster's TUEL had gained a strong foothold. When the union's Social Democratic leadership, well versed in the ways of Communist infiltration, suspended those locals dominated by the TUEL, the Communists promptly established a Joint Action Committee which virtually functioned as a union within a union, negotiating agreements with employers and collecting membership dues. Then in 1926, the Communist Party leadership decided that the political situation called for a needle trades' strike and ordered their reluctant trade union representatives in the New York locals to call the workers onto the streets. The strike was turned into a maelstrom of Communist political action: demand for a labor party and for an amalgamation of all unions made the affair grotesque. When the top ILGWU leadership finally brought the strike to a halt, it was found that almost a million dollars of local union funds had gone down the drain.

These defeats did not discourage the Communist Party. Although ejected time and again from the AFL unions, they kept returning to the fray—not in the form of "dual unions," but on the principle of "boring from within." In 1928, however, Moscow's policy changed, and the American Communists were instructed to cease "cooperating" with the "reactionary" AFL unions; instead, they were told to build their own organizations. Obediently, they set to organizing a full battery of "dual unions"—a miners' union, a needle trades' industrial union, a shoe workers' union, and so on. Yet if the tactics changed, the objective remained the same: throughout all these years the Communists gave ample evidence that their essential goal was to win support for Soviet policies, foreign and domestic, and that the espousal of legitimate workers' demands hardly entered into their political calculations.

THIS BRAND of political cynicism was displayed even more brazenly in the Communist incursion into Hollywood during the 1940's. As Mr. Saposs demonstrates so clearly in his detailed case study, the Communist goal was not merely to influence screen writers and actors, but to capture control of the numerous craft organizations that abounded in the city. Here was an industry worth capturing, for it was seemingly the focus of American cultural life. A scandal centering on corruption and racketeering gave the Communists their opportunity, and they moved in with their usual display of determination and fortitude. Employing a so-called united front organization, the Conference of Studio Unions, they managed to seize control of virtually all Hollywood unions. Immediately, support was lent

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to all sorts of Communist front organizations, while criticisms of such events as the Communist *coup* in Czechoslovakia was at most "gentle and casual." As Saposs says, it was only the determined opposition of the parent trade union body and a merciless public exposure that finally awakened the community to a realization of what was going on.

The fact is, concludes Saposs, that American trade unions were able to escape infiltration and ultimate domination only when key leaders shed whatever connections they may have had with Communists or fellow-travelers. Most trade unionists could not continue taking orders from people who not only knew little of the industry as such but whose main interest was to use the unions as vehicles for Soviet propaganda. The labor leaders discovered that expulsion of the Communists did not weaken their organizations: on the contrary, it enhanced their effectiveness and even gained them membership.

The Communist problem was even more serious in the CIO, for here Communists and fellow-travellers succeeded in penetrating the National Headquarters itself, as well as the affiliated trade unions. In the early years of the CIO (1936-37), when the country was swept by a wave of violent strikes, the CP remained aloof. Still harboring hopes of reentering the AFL, which at that time was engaged in a conflict with the newly emergent CIO, the Communists preferred to remain "neutral." The growing strength and effectiveness of the new organization, however, coupled with its ebullient and militant spirit, made it a natural target for Communist penetration. Accordingly, the party moved in at full strength, and soon the labor organization was filled with Communist organizers and propagandists. Even more important was the appointment of Communists to key posts in the National Office: the editor of the *CIO News,* Len De Caux, and John L. Lewis' chief counsel, Lee Pressman, both party members, wielded enormous power. More and more party members were placed on the payroll and each brought along other comrades. The process was repeated in the affiliated national unions, and before long almost a dozen organizations in the CIO were either controlled by the Communists or had strong party blocs within them.

The CP members functioned as a disciplined body, wearing out the opposition with late meetings, gaining control over jobs and insuring for themselves a steady flow of funds for sundry Communist causes. Wherever possible the political stance of the unions was twisted to conform to the current Soviet position. At first the war that broke out in 1939 was "phony" and little more than an "imperialist adventure." But when the Soviet Union was attacked, the war suddenly turned into a laudable struggle against fascism. When the German army moved eastward toward Moscow, the CIO Communists launched a feverish campaign for a second front. When General George Marshall proposed an aid program to rebuild Europe after the war, the Communists demanded its repudiation. Every turn in Stalin's foreign policy was reflected in the public statements of the Communist-dominated unions.

BY 1949 THE CIO leadership had had enough. Internal struggles in the United Auto Workers Union, National Maritime Union and Transport Workers eliminated powerful Communist Party groups within these organizations. Expulsion from the parent body of ten national unions followed shortly afterward. Both Kampelman and Saposs relate these incidents in great detail: it is a story worth reading, for despite the postwar collapse of the American Communist Party, its record of persistence is something to keep in mind. Mr. Saposs particularly insists that the Communists are embarking on a fresh program of union penetration. New party members, he says, have been placed in various unions and instructed studiously to avoid political and social issues, with the hope that eventually they may rise to positions of leadership and power.

Yet it seems doubtful now that the Communists could ever again attain the heights they reached in the CIO during the 1930's and 1940's. Trade union leaders have had a bitter trial, and they are now ever watchful as they turn to the more important—and traditional—business of straightforward "bread-and-butter" unionism. For a good many of them, the broader social and political values which the Communists so assiduously tried to exploit to their own advantage have lost none of their power and attractiveness. If anything, they can pursue them far more effectively now that the most destructive element in the labor movement has been removed from the scene.

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Moscow's Experimental Venture: The Vienna World Youth Festival

IN THEIR BIANNUAL EFFORT to foster "the consolidation of the democratic forces of youth," the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and the International Union of Students (IUS), two major constellations in the solar system of Communist-front organizations, jointly sponsored the Seventh World Festival of Youth and Students in Vienna from July 26 to August 4 of this year. Under the banner of "Peace and Friendship" and behind a smokescreen of singing, dancing, cultural exhibitions and sports contests—an official handout stated that there were "on the average 80 events per day"—a major campaign was waged to demonstrate the moral and socio-economic superiority of socialism over capitalism and to persuade the delegates, particularly those from the underdeveloped countries, that Communist "victories" are not only inevitable but desirable.

The history of the World Youth Festivals demonstrates that far from being non-political and non-partisan, as their publicity claims, they have consistently and unquestioningly followed the dictates of Soviet foreign policy. The first three festivals, held in Prague (1947), Budapest (1949) and East Berlin (1951), reflected the Soviet policy line in the most venomous stage of the cold war: they attacked the non-Communist leaders of Asian and African nationalism as "bourgeois imperialist lackies"; they directed violent condemnations at the United States, Britain and the "western imperialist warmongers"; they welcomed and then expelled Yugoslav youth delegates; they celebrated the Chinese Communist victory.

WITH THE DEATH OF Stalin, the festivals held in Bucharest (1953), Warsaw (1955) and Moscow (1957) adopted the less blatant and more flexible tactics of the new Soviet policy: Asian and African national movements were praised and infiltrated instead of boycotted and condemned, non-Communist personalities and organizations were courted so as to add respectability to the festivals, and emphasis was placed on the need for international cooperation to solve the problems facing world youth. The festival in Vienna has been a continuation of this post-Stalin policy.

A major effort was made by the sponsors to make the event appear non-partisan. As evidence, they pointed to the well-known figures who have endorsed the festival—*e.g.*, Sean O'Casey, J. D. Bernall, Paul Robeson. Because the WFDY and the IUS have become so well-known as Communist front groups, they followed their usual custom of creating their own "front"—the International Preparatory Committee (IPC) of the Vienna Festival—as the organization formally responsible for operations. It was maintained that the festival staff was international and representative of all political tendencies, but most of the IPC members were WFDY and IUS veterans. Jean Garcias, the General-Secretary of the IPC, is a 34-year-old French Communist official who worked at WFDY headquarters for five years prior to being sent to Vienna in April 1958 to take charge of preparations. At the 1957 Moscow festival, the leading organizer was Alexander Shelepin, former First Secretary of the Soviet Komsomol, Vice-President of IUS from 1946-53, first Vice-President of WFDY in 1953-54, reelected for a two-year term in the same office in August 1957—and three times a member of the IPC staffs formed to organize festivals. It is perhaps not surprising that his long years of service to the "youth of the world" were rewarded by his appointment last December to succeed General Ivan Serov as chief of the Soviet security organization, the KGB. It is probable that 32-year-old Valentin Vdovin, Komsomol secretary at WFDY headquarters since 1955, Soviet secretary in IUS from 1951-54 and close associate of Shelepin, played the major behind-the-scenes role during the Vienna activities.

As further proof of the non-Communist character of the festival, IPC literature repeatedly pointed to the choice of Vienna as its site. All previous festivals, with the exception of the 1947 gathering in Prague, which preceded the Communist *coup* by six months, have been held in the capitals of Communist countries. Keenly aware of criticism of the past gatherings as strictly Soviet bloc demon-

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strations, those responsible decided that moving the festival out of the bloc to a neutral capital would win respectability and prestige for the event and its sponsors. Though the advantages of total cooperation from local authorities, power over visas, mobilization of "volunteer" labor, direction of the mass media, and help from the police and army, were in this case absent, Vienna was not without its advantages. Four-power occupation of Vienna, from 1945 to 1955, had given the Soviets an opportunity to set up a number of front organizations in their sector. Though the major front groups with permanent headquarters there—the World Federation of Trade Unions and the World Peace Council—were expelled after the occupation for endangering Austrian neutrality, a network of services and facilities had been maintained. These organizations were instrumental in making the festival arrangements—housing the delegates, providing translation equipment and secretarial services, acting as a funnel for the vast moneys poured into the festival, *etc.* Such facilities are available in very few places outside the Soviet bloc.

THE TONE OF THE festival was set by the opening ceremonies at Wiener Stadium. For approximately four hours, a crowd estimated at 50,000 was treated to a parade of 11,000 delegates, many in colorful national costumes, a gymnastics display by 1,200 athletes from Czechoslovakia (who were specially imported for this demonstration and returned home that same night), dancing by national groups from every continent and an impressive fireworks display. As each delegation passed the reviewing stand they were greeted with the same words, "Friendship, peace —we welcome the young ambassadors of peace in Vienna." At the height of the proceedings, several thousand "peace doves" were released. (Unfortunately for some of the spectators, the pigeons added their own personal touch to the festivities.) The peace and friendship chant—"Frieden und Freundschaft," "Mir i Druzhba"—was on the lips of all of the delegations as they circled the stadium.

The most impressive delegations were from Iraq, China, the various East European countries and the Soviet Union. As the Soviet delegation was being announced a barrage of fireworks suddenly began, and rocket-launched parachutes bearing the official festival flag dropped from the sky. There was no question but that the really important delegation had arrived. At the IPC press conference the following day the fact that the fireworks began just as the Soviet delegation was announced was deemed to be coincidence. It was explained that in agreement with the Viennese Fire Department, the fireworks display was set for a certain time. However, the delegates were one-half hour late as they marched into the stadium. The fact that the time specified coincided with the announcement of the Soviets was "purely accidental."

Another interesting tactic was the fact that the Japanese delegation carried the only overtly political banners in the opening parade, though they later appeared among other groups. As the Japanese slowly circled the stadium they bore signs which read "Atom-Free Zone in Asia," "Ban A- and H-Bombs." Throughout the whole festival, the Japanese played the major role in propagandizing the anti-nuclear weapons theme. At the August 1st "Celebration in Honor of Friendship and Peace among the Peoples, against Atomic Weapons, for Disarmament and Peaceful Coexistence," a Japanese chorus sang "The Song of Hiroshima." They were introduced by a girl who gave an eyewitness account of the horrors of the first atom-bomb explosion. At this same demonstration, which began with a two-hour parade along the Ring, Vienna's grand boulevard, banners were carried by various delegations protesting against nuclear weapons tests and the cold war. The Soviet delegation carried signs in Russian, German, French, English and Arabic. Two delegations shouldered banners calling for a "Summit Conference for Peace."

The tendentious use of the "peace" slogan was more obviously revealed at the meeting "On the contribution of the youth of Asia and the Pacific region to the cause of peace, so that the Pacific Ocean will be a peace ocean, which is the common interest of the young people of Asia and the Pacific region." The tone of this meeting reflected the official Soviet position with regard to the existence of American bases in the Pacific.

DURING THE FESTIVAL'S Student Program, organized by the IUS, many seminars, conferences and lectures were held. Though discussion was essentially unrestricted and there were some opportunities to present non-Communist interpretations of the subject at hand, the complexion of these meetings was determined by the IPC, which selected both topics and speakers. Invariably these gatherings proclaimed the superiority of the Communist system and lashed out against the moral debauchery of the capitalist system, whether the subject under discussion was "The Problems of Contemporary Literature," "Nature and Man in the Light of the Achievements of Contemporary Science, Technology and Philosophy," or "Problems in the Conquest of Space." For instance, Soviet Professor Georgi Vinogradoff, a member of the Academy of Sciences, speaking in a seminar on "Atomic Energy, Today and Tomorrow," included in his remarks on Soviet progress an attack against the atomic rearmament of West Germany. Many incidents of this type could be cited.

The most blatant examples of Communist propagandizing were to be seen at the international exhibitions of art and photography. Of these, the most unashamedly partisan *pièce d'art* was a poster-like Guatemalan painting, variously depicting an ugly-faced American soldier shooting an Oriental with hands tied behind his back, a partially-buried "U.S. Air Force" bomb, another bomb from which vermin are crawling and, carrying doves of peace, North Korean troops descending upon the imperialist marauders. Less obvious were three Japanese photographs

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showing respectively a column of marching Japanese troops, a group of American GI's, and Japanese youngsters playing at war with toy pistols: the caption under these pictures read "A city in which the American Army and Japanese Wehrmacht are situated." On the side of positive propaganda there were the expected themes: friendship, personified by a smiling and waving Khrushchev in an East German photograph; socialist economic progress, highlighted by the predominantly industrial scenes in the North Korean, Rumanian and Chinese displays; Soviet scientific achievements, subtly indicated by numerous water-colors on space travel done by young Soviet children, hung in the special children's section of the exhibition. In the American photographic display, pictures of privation and squalor dominated. The only caption to be found read "Slums and Young Toughs."

Though the Soviet delegation never took an overbearing lead in the various festival activities, the dominance of Soviet influence was felt everywhere. The ubiquitous impact of the 800-strong contingent, constantly chanting "Mir i Druzhba" and singing Dunayevski's "March of Enthusiasts" (the unofficial anthem of the WFDY); the Soviet trucks bearing the Soviet "Kino-khronima" klieg lights, used at every outdoor rally; the ever-present horde of Soviet newspaper photographers and radio correspondents carrying their portable tape recorders—all bore witness to the guiding hand behind the festival. At every festival event, the Soviet participation was the featured performance. Though others frequently made the passionate appeals, the Soviet speakers assumed the role of "elder statesmen." Virtually always together in large groups, the young (and some not so young) Soviet delegates were constantly smiling, waving, shaking hands and distributing lapel-pins.

The delegates were assisted—and applauded—by large numbers of Soviet tourists (approximately 4,000), who also carried about seemingly inexhaustible supplies of pins. Thousands of "tourists" also arrived from Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Communist supporters from all parts of Austria were reported to have been brought to Vienna to attend the August 1st rally on disarmament. These moves to insure a show of enthusiasm from the sidelines apparently reflected the apprehension felt over the reception that would greet a festival outside the Iron Curtain.

THAT SUCH APPREHENSION was to some extent justified became clear in perhaps the most unique feature of the festival, as contrasted with past gatherings—and that was the presence of a counteractive opposition in Vienna. Austrian non-Communist youth groups set up Information Centers throughout the city, usually near the site of a festival activity. Large crowds, even including some people from the Communist delegations, frequently formed at these points to discuss political questions. There was notable cooperation between various nationalities of anti-Communist young people. Catholics and Socialists worked well together and with independent student groups. Anti-Communist literature was distributed by the Austrians, and a two-volume pocket edition of *Dr. Zhivago*, in Russian, was also available. The Austrian youth groups also arranged bus tours to the heavily fortified Hungarian border. The anti-Communist youth could count themselves successful in contacting Eastern European delegates, particularly the Poles and East Germans, but unfortunately did not seem to attract much non-European attention.

Where the Communists are challenged on facts with which Arabs or Negroes may not be familiar, they blandly deny that the facts are real.

A striking example of this occurred during the press conference given by the Soviet delegation. The conference, presided over by Mr. Voronov, the editor of Komsomolskaia Pravda, *was invited to consider the iniquity of the Vienna newspapers in boycotting the festival on the grounds that it is a Communist propaganda affair.*

But when Mr. Voronov was asked about the jamming of the BBC broadcasts to Russia, he said that so far as he knew no such jamming was taking place.

—From "Vienna's Snares for Young Marxists," by Victor Zorza, *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, August 6, 1959, p. 7.

The splits which occurred in some of the delegations, particularly the American, certainly disturbed the total harmony which usually prevails at the festivals. Garcias' heavy-handed efforts to get sole recognition for the fellow-travelling minority of the US participants were widely-known and provoked some adverse comments from other delegates. Frequently, but not uniformly, efforts were made to exclude unidentified delegates from the seminars. Special privileges were accorded Communist newsmen, while representatives of the Western press had difficulty in obtaining admission to some conference activities. The latter discrimination, however, was not known to the delegates themselves.

As for the general public reception, the coolness of the local population to the festival must have been something of a surprise to those delegates who remembered the huge Moscow throngs cheering them on in 1957. The Viennese, who lived with Soviet occupation troops for ten years, gaped rather than applauded.

A major defeat for the festival was the opposition of the "Big Three" of neutralism—Nasser, Nehru and Nkrumah. Though it was never acknowledged by the IPC, there was no one present representing the UAR. Perhaps to compensate for this boycott, the nearly 400 delegates from Kassem's Iraq were given much attention. Most of the

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delegates from India and all from Ghana were students from European, mainly British, universities rather than representatives coming directly from their own countries. There was no official Pakistani delegation either, and one lone Burmese peace partisan carried his nation's banner in the procession.

DESPITE THE PRESENCE of an opposition, the record of the Vienna Festival does not show that it was substantially deflected from the aims and traditions established by its predecessors. The dominant policy lines—peace and friendship, nuclear disarmament, anti-colonialism, Soviet-Communist invincibility—were forcefully propagated. In addition to the activities at the festival proper, many of the delegates were invited, at small or no cost to themselves, to visit various countries of the "socialist camp" before the festival or on their way home. Most of the Asian delegates travelled to Vienna through the Soviet Union with the financial assistance of the Soviet Festival Committee. The Australian delegation, for example, came to Vienna via China and the Soviet Union. At every step along the route, their hosts made sure that they were greeted by huge throngs of enthusiastic well-wishers and "supporters."

"It must be realized that the festival is not only for song and amusement: it is above all a political event on a world scale," said one Communist paper (*Trybunu Ludu*, May 25). That the organizers and sponsors took their task to heart has been clearly demonstrated.

Morton Schwartz

Mr. Schwartz is a young American student of Soviet affairs. His attendance at the Vienna Youth Festival followed visits to the Soviet Union, Poland and other East European countries.

The Technical Elite vs. the Party— A First-hand Report

STARTING OUT FROM the general theory that political power tends to follow economic authority, a number of political analysts anticipated at the time of Stalin's death that the subsequent evolution of Soviet society would be marked by a rise in the political fortunes of the technical élite, *i.e.*, the economic administrators, plant managers, engineers and other technical personnel directing the day-to-day operation of the Soviet economy. James Burnham's term, "the managerial revolution," was used to describe this expected development, and it was frequently assumed that one of the consequences would be the emergence of Malenkov—believed to represent and to "base himself upon" the technical élite—as the predominant political figure of the post-Stalin era.

Events, of course, have not borne out these predictions. Instead of the emancipation of the technical "intelligentsia" from political control by the party, the post-Stalin period has witnessed the gradual expansion of the party's role and authority in not only the economic but almost every sector of Soviet life; in agriculture and the police in 1953, in industry in 1955, and in the army in 1957. Within the party itself, there has been a decrease in the proportion of the party membership belonging to the technical élite, and a particularly sharp drop during the last six years in its representation on the top-level party body, the Presidium of the Central Committee. All this has been accompanied by Khrushchev's rise to undisputed political pre-eminence. Evidently basing himself solely on the party apparatus, he has eliminated seven of the ten members of the first post-Stalin Presidium in his drive to supreme power. Malenkov, the presumed champion of the technical bureaucracy, was one of the first victims.

There undoubtedly are various reasons for the failure of the expected "managerial revolution" to materialize, at least to date, but certainly a major one lies in the fact that the party apparatus itself has played an important part in industrial decision-making, not merely on the highest echelons of policy formulation but at the lower operating levels as well. Even granting that economic authority tends to generate political power, the fact remains that the technical élite simply did not—and does not now—have a monopoly of economic authority. Quite apart from the overall economic leadership exercised by

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the party Presidium and Central Committee, a great many key economic functions have been performed by the lower party echelons, with the result that actual control of what Marxists term "the means of production" has rested much more in the hands of the party apparatus than in those of the technical élite.

A very vital, but hitherto little known, aspect of the party's role in Soviet economic life concerns its functions and powers in the selection of personnel for high managerial positions. Specialists on Soviet government have, to be sure, long been aware that each organ of the party apparatus, from the local district committees on up to the all-Union Central Committee, has under its jurisdiction a certain number of specified managerial positions, appointments to and dismissals from which can be carried out only with its prior explicit approval. (Every party body has what is officially known as its *nomenklatura*, or list of positions coming under its jurisdictional control.) But while the existence of this system of party control in industry was known, the details of how it actually operates have remained obscure, largely because of extreme Soviet reticence regarding it.[1] Indeed, the very term *nomenklatura* seldom appears in public print in the Soviet Union.

BECAUSE OF the paucity of information on this topic the present writer decided to make the party *nomenklatura* one of his main topics of inquiry during a recent study trip to the Soviet Union. He had interviews with a number of persons holding responsible positions in factories, party organs, and *sovnarkhozy* (the economic councils which are the administrative bodies for the new economic regions). While those interviewed often showed some uneasiness when the topic of *nomenklatura* was broached, a large percentage of them sincerely tried to explain the system, and the talks were, on the whole, quite fruitful.

They established first of all that there are indeed an immense number of industrial positions which can be filled (or vacated) only with the approval of some party organ. Not only the directorships but also some of the lesser positions in all important factories are included in the *nomenklatura* of one party body or another, and the higher the post, the higher-ranking the organ in whose *nomenklatura* it falls. The Minsk Ball-Bearing Works can probably be taken as a typical example of the jurisdictional distribution of positions in major heavy industrial plants. Its director, P. I. Yashcheritsyn, stated that his position and that of the plant's chief engineer were in the *nomenklatura* of the all-Union Central Committee, the other major posts in the *nomenklatura* of intermediate party committees, and the shop-heads in the *nomenklatura* of the local district committee (*raikom*) of the party.

Perhaps reflecting the lesser emphasis on consumer goods production, fewer positions in these industries appear to be included in the *nomenklatura*, and then they usually are not on the lists of central party organs but on those of local bodies. Thus, the position of director of the Rosa Luxemburg Knitted Goods Factory in Kiev, a model plant with 2,000 workers, is in the *nomenklatura* of the Kiev City party committee (*gorkom*), and the posts of chief engineer, chief mechanic, and chief bookkeeper in that of the district party committee.

Although it was impossible to ascertain the overall number of positions covered by *nomenklatura* in the USSR, and their distribution among the various levels of the party apparatus, data obtained by the writer for the city of Minsk, capital of the Belorussian Republic, provide at least a partial clue. According to Alexander P. Nikonorov, First Deputy Chairman of the Belorussian *sovnarkhoz*, the post of director in ten of Minsk's factories and that of chief engineer in five of them are in the *nomenklatura* of the all-Union Central Committee in Moscow, while the directorships of another 40-50 plants are within the purview of the Central Committee of the Belorussian Republic.[2] Thus, the top managers of about 16 percent of the city's industrial plants (which number 384 in all[3]) are covered by the *nomenklatura* of the all-Union and Republic Central Committees. No information is available regarding the distribution of Minsk enterprises by size, but assuming that the published statistics for the Soviet Union as a whole are applicable to Minsk (and they should be reasonably relevant), one may estimate that the ten plants whose directors come under the *nomenklatura* of the all-Union CC employ about one-third of the city's industrial workers, and the 40-50 whose heads are subject to the Belorussian CC almost one-half—both together embracing five-sixths of the local industrial force.[4]

It may well be that, in the huge Russian and Ukrainian Republics, more positions—particularly in the consumer goods sector—have been delegated to the control of

[1] Professor Merle Fainsod's study of the Smolensk Archive (*Smolensk under Soviet Rule,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1958) furnishes considerable information about the *nomenklatura.* In the period covered by the Archive (*i.e.,* through the 1930's), however, the Smolensk region was still almost exclusively agricultural, so that the documents are of limited value for the study of Soviet industrial management. Also, of course, the Archive material on this subject has to some extent become outdated as a result of recent changes in the Soviet economic structure.

[2] Mr. Nikonorov answered the author's questions without resort to notes; hence, the figures given here must be regarded as approximate.

[3] *Narodnoe Khoziaistvo Belorusskoi SSR* (National Economy of the Belorussian SSR), Government Statistical Publishing House, Moscow, 1957, p. 13.

[4] *Promyshlennost SSR—Statisticheskii Sbornik* (USSR Industry—Statistical Handbook), Government Statistical Publishing House, Moscow, 1957, p. 18.

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lower-level party organs. However, the directorships of key heavy industrial enterprises, such as the Kharkov Electro-mechanical Works, are invariably listed in the *nomenklatura* of the all-Union Central Committee. This represents an important limitation upon the economic decentralization measures instituted in recent years. For even though the former economic ministries of the central government have been abolished, the Central Committee of the party still retains its authority to sanction or reject appointments or dismissals of the top executives of the country's most important industrial enterprises.

But important as these powers of the party apparatus are in principle, the essential question is how they are applied in practice. If the party organs in fact used their authority only for the purpose of passing upon the political reliability of proposed appointees to the positions under their respective jurisdictions, the significance of the *nomenklatura* would appear to be relatively minor, and to be decreasing with the passage of time. The evidence suggests, however, that such is not the case.

In seeking the answer to this question, we must keep in mind that personnel actions in the economic sphere are formally put into effect by decrees or orders emanating always from the appropriate organs of governmental administration, and never from the party apparatus. The party does not "decree" personnel actions, it merely recommends them: as the classic jargon of Soviet governmental theory phrases it, the party must work "through the economic organs."

However, one does not have to read many Soviet press reports to discern that the party organs devote much time and attention to personnel matters, and that their recommendations are a vital—and perhaps often decisive—part of the administrative process. It is frequently mentioned that some party organ "promoted" *(vydvinul)*[5] or "decided to remove" *(obstranit)*[6] some administrative official. Also, at the time of the 1957 reorganization of the economic structure, the press often carried reports such as that in *Pravda* (May 29, 1957) stating that "the chief attention of the Leningrad regional, city, and district committees [of the party] is now concentrated on the selection of personnel for the *sovnarkhoz*."

In the Factory Komsomol Committee

—They need your help at the shop, Comrade Secretary.
—But I've been freed from production work.

—Krokodil *(Moscow)*, *April 20, 1958.*

WHILE THE wording used in these examples is clearly difficult to reconcile with the theory that the party only recommends and does not act in personnel matters, the earlier-mentioned official of the Belorussian *sovnarkhoz* confirmed to this writer that such references nevertheless reflect the actual state of affairs. Thus, it is clear that, in fact, the party organs do usually play a decisive part in personnel appointments, promotions, and removals. According to Mr. Nikonorov, the initiative for replacing the incumbent of a position listed in the *nomenklatura* of a certain party organ may be taken either by that organ or by the appropriate government administrative office, but it is most often the party organ which initiates action. When the position is in the *nomenklatura* of either the all-Union or the republic party CC, the decision of either body, as the case may be, is final, and the *sovnarkhoz* is automatically obliged to issue the necessary formal decree. Where the position is in the *nomenklatura* of a lower-level party organ, as for example a regional committee *(obkom)*, action affecting it requires mutual agreement between the *obkom* and the *sovnarkhoz*. Disagreements are rare since the *sovnarkhoz* usually accepts the *obkom's* recommendations but any differences which the two bodies cannot compose between themselves are referred to the republic party CC for final decision. Thus here also, the party has the last word.

This being the case—and Mr. Nikonorov could have had no conceivable reason for misrepresenting the situation in this light—the key role which the party apparatus plays in the sphere of economic enterprise becomes manifest. In any job in any country, the authority which its occupant must satisfy before any other is that which

[5] *Pravda*, July 23, 1957, p. 2.

[6] Vsevolod Kochetov, *Molodost s Nami* (Youth is With Us), Soviet Writer Publishing House, 1957, p. 49.

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has the final word with regard to his retention of it, or his replacement. In the Soviet Union, through the *nomenklatura*, it is the party apparatus which controls the occupancy of all important managerial positions. When a Soviet plant director for any reason "loses the trust" of the party organ which has authority over his position, he is virtually certain to be removed regardless of how highly his competence may be evaluated by his nominal administrative (*i.e.* governmental) superiors.

The abolition of the government economic ministries in July 1957[7] has only served to accentuate the authority of the party apparatus in the economic sphere. Prior to the reorganization, the local party organs were in a relatively weak position when it came to disputing decisions affecting important economic enterprise in their localities, since these decisions were taken by a powerful central government ministry thousands of miles away in Moscow.[8] Now, however, with economic administration in the hands of the *sovnarkhozy*, which usually are located in the centers of the economic "regions" under their jurisdiction, and whose chairmen are clearly subordinate in power and prestige to the first secretary of the regional party committee, the situation is quite different. It is highly probable, indeed, that at least one of the motivations behind Khrushchev's decentralization move was his desire to strengthen the position of the party apparatus vis-à-vis the economic administrators.

As might be expected, the intervention of the party apparatus in economic affairs does not stop with the exercise of its authority in personnel matters. The first secretary of a regional party committee actively concerns himself with all economic problems of the region, and in addition each local party organ has one secretary who devotes full time to industrial matters, with a subordinate staff of one or more sections *(otdely)* to assist him. These functionaries exercise broad surveillance over economic activities and have the right, as well as duty, to scrutinize all decisions by the local administrative authorities on "questions of principle"—a right which, as press reports indicate, has sometimes been stretched to include matters of "secondary" importance as well.[9]

More than anything else perhaps, it is this extensive participation of the party apparatus in economic personnel selection and decision-making that explains why the apparatus has successfully forestalled the predicted "managerial revolution." However, the fact that the managerial or technical élite lacks the strength to effect a "revolution" does not mean that it willingly accepts the intrusion of the party apparatus in the economic sphere. To be sure, complaints against the *nomenklatura* are totally absent from the Soviet press. However, when one member of the group of editors of Soviet youth publications who visited the United States last year was asked about the *nomenklatura*, he replied, "We are struggling against that phenomenon." It would be strange if it were otherwise.

THE STRUGGLE, however, is an exceedingly difficult one. The members of the party apparatus, having tasted power, cannot be expected to relinquish it willingly. It is possible, of course, that what has been termed the "pronounced technical-rational development" of Soviet society in recent years[10] may gradually diminish the party's control over economic personnel appointments through the *nomenklatura*. Yet, the rationalization that has taken place to date has consisted, by and large, of measures that were deemed by the party leadership to be either economically or politically indispensable. While industrial efficiency might be improved somewhat by freeing personnel appointments from the dangers of political patronage and intrigue, this is probably a marginal consideration for the party. After all, political machines have always been the last to recognize that the advantages of protective guarantees of the civil service variety would be worth the cost to themselves in terms of diminished political power.

Whatever changes may eventually take place under succeeding Soviet leaderships, there is no reason to believe that there will be any diminution of the party's role in industry under Khrushchev's strongly party-oriented policies. The recent creation of special "party control commissions" to exercise surveillance within the factories themselves is only the latest sign that the present leadership is determined to assure the party apparatus of the greatest possible role in Soviet industrial administration.

Jerry F. Hough

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[7] For an analysis of the 1957 reorganization, see Alec Nove, "The Soviet Industrial Reorganization," *Problems of Communism*, No. 6 (November-December) 1957, pp. 19-25.

[8] A Leningrad engineer told the author that he personally knew of a number of cases in which party organs had attempted to remove certain economic officials but failed because of the refusal of the government ministries concerned to agree. If this was true for Leningrad, with the second strongest regional party organization in the Soviet Union, the power of the regional party organs in peripheral areas must have been much less.

[9] See statement by G. Dzhavkhishvili, Chairman of the Georgian Council of Ministers, in *Zarya Vostoka*, August 23, 1956, p. 2.

[10] Barrington Moore, *Terror and Progress—USSR*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1954, p. 224.

A graduate student at Harvard University, Mr. Hough visited the Soviet Union in 1958 to collect first-hand material for his Ph.D. thesis on the Communist Party's role in Soviet industrial administration. The present article is based on his studies.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Readers are welcome to send communications dealing with matters discussed in *Problems of Communism.* Letters should be addressed to the Editors, *Problems of Communism,* U.S. Information Agency, 1729 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington 25, D.C.

WHO SAID WHAT?

Max Hayward's article ("Soviet Literature in the Doldrums," July-August 1959) indicates how Soviet history, retroactively rewritten, is sometimes accepted as true even by those inclined to suspect the trustworthiness of the source.

Mr. Hayward, for example, writes that "formalism" was the "term chosen (in the 1920's) by a small but very influential group of literary critics to describe their method of analyzing the linguistic and structural aspects of works of literature. Its pejorative application to writers [in subsequent periods] was a misappropriation of the term."

Actually the reverse was the case. The term "formalist" *was* from the very beginning a pejorative one. It was invented in the 1920's by the enemies of scholars and critics favoring the esthetic and linguistic approach, *i.e.* by the practitioners of the Marxist sociological approach. The "formalists" themselves resented this appelation.

The other myth accepted at face value is the quotation from Khrushchev's speech at the Third Writers' Congress in 1959 (published with the article as a box, p. 15). In it Khrushchev credits the Soviet writer Leonid Sobolev with observing that "The party and the government have given the Soviet author absolutely everything and have deprived him only of one right—the right to write badly."

Khrushchev was wrong—either intentionally or unintentionally. The statement was made in 1934 at the First Writers' Congress not by Sobolev, who incidentally was present when Khrushchev made his speech, but by a writer who in the late 1930's disappeared in a Soviet concentration camp. The name of the writer was Isaac Babel. And the quotation given by Khrushchev was not complete, either, for after making the above quip Babel continued with these words:

> Comrades, let us not fool ourselves: this (the right to write badly) is a very important thing, and to take it away from us is no small thing. May God help us if we ever give up this right. And if there is no God, let us help ourselves. . . .

Hunter College, N. Y. — *Maurice Friedberg*

Editors' reply: Mr. Friedberg's correction regarding the source of Khrushchev's quotation is as interesting as it is revealing, even though to refer to the statement as a "myth" may be too strong. Isaac Babel was one of the most talented of Soviet writers; he disappeared during the Stalinist purges of the 1930's and was just recently rehabilitated in the Soviet Union—and only partially at that. Whether Khrushchev's mistake was deliberate or not is immaterial; there is little doubt that he would have left out the concluding portion of Babel's speech—as supplied here by Mr. Friedberg—even if he had chosen to identify the author correctly.

As for the proper use of the term "formalism," Mr. Victor Erlich, in his article "Soviet Literary Criticism—Past and Present," (*Problems of Communism,* January-February 1958, p. 36), writes as follows:

> The term "formalism" has been bandied about so recklessly in latter-day Soviet propaganda that one is likely to forget its initial meaning. What can be legitimately referred to as "Russian formalism" is a school in Russian literary scholarship which originated in the years 1915-16. . . . The Formalists viewed literature as a distinct field of human endeavor, as a verbal art rather than a reflection of society or a battleground of ideas.

Mr. Hayward adds the following:

> Erlich [in his definitive work *Russian Formalism— History-Doctrine,* Mouton & Co., The Hague, The Netherlands, 1955] does not discuss the origin of the term. It may well be pejorative in origin, but I think the point is that in serious literary discussion it was accepted on both sides as useful shorthand for the 'formal method in literature,' as the Formalists themselves preferred to call it. In any event, pejorative or not, it was used in the early period in a reasonably objective manner and not as a scurrilous term of abuse to be applied indiscriminately to all *writers* (not just literary critics).

Whether or not Mr. Friedberg's criticism is correct, he again has proved his indefatigable zest for literary detective-work—as was so amply demonstrated in his study, "Soviet Literature and Retroactive Truth" (*Problems of Communism,* January-February 1954).

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